592 (except for cleaning) only by men of the group
342 and their male visitors. Within, a passage leads to the central courtyard, round which
[352] rooms open off on two or three sides. These include the ancestor-shrine of the group, several store-rooms for clothing, vessels and paddy (stored in carved wooden chests), one or more bed- and [55] sitting-rooms each containing a bedroll, bench, wooden stools and a rope to hang clothes; and a small room used by women during their delivery and menstrual seclusions. Beyond the courtyard to the west is a long narrow dining hall with a large kitchen behind it, and behind this the back verandah occupied only by servants, women and children. Upstairs may be four or five empty bedrooms in which women receive their visiting husbands. Men born into the group seldom enter the upstairs' rooms and may not use the women's staircase.

[427] Outside in the courtyard a separate building
[987] may be devoted to storing paddy paid as rents
[343] by the group's tenants. The upstairs of the building is often set aside for the karanavan's[1] use; here he sleeps, is served with food by women of the house, entertains his friends and keeps records of the group's economic transactions. If the group is large, a second separate building is often reserved for junior men to sleep, read and entertain friends when they are
593 not visiting their wives. In village headmen's
342 and chiefly property-groups whose women often have Nambudiri husbands, a separate building with its own kitchen, granary and Brahman

[1] [Eldest man of the property-group -- Analyst]

servants is set aside at the expense of the taravad to entertain these men when they visit their wives, sometimes for two or three days at a time.

The buildings and courtyard are surrounded by a shady garden of coconut, jackfruit, cashew nut and mango trees. Chiefs and village headmen have a private bathing pool with stone steps running round it in their own garden; retainer [56] Nayars more often bathe in the large public bathing pools attached to the temples and reserved for "clean" castes of the village. Men and women bathe and swim daily in public clad in a loin-cloth, on opposite sides of the pool. Both boys and girls become excellent swimmers and divers almost as soon as they can walk.

In the southeast corner of the garden is an open space set aside as the group's cremation ground, while at another corner is a dense shrubbery devoted to the snake-gods of the group, in which small stone images of cobras are set up.

The property-group was traditionally a corporate group in other sense than those in which this term applied to the lineage. Whereas the lineage was held responsible in cases of offence against religious law (sins, or crimes against the village community), the property-group was responsible in cases of debt or theft (torts). The headman, on behalf of the group, must make restitution for such offences from the group's jointly owned funds. In addition, as representative of the group in the assembly, he must pay annual dues to the temple funds. Through its headman, the group also acted as a single legal personality in the payment of wages to its

592 of serfs. He could command all other members,
602 male or female, and children were trained to
868 obey him with reverence. He[1] had the rights of a pater over small children: till puberty he was responsible for having them educated in Malayalam reading and writing, must discipline them like a father in patriliny, and might beat them if they disobeyed. Even today in orthodox
[593] houses, the father of a child has no share at all in the karanavan's rights of pater: he may not interfere in education or discipline or question the karanavan's right to dispose of a child's career and services.

As their legal guardian, the karanavan must traditionally pass on to young men the martial traditions, swords and other weapons of the taravad. He must educate them also in the management of lands and serfs and the cultivation of gardens. Even today in villages, every Nayar has expert knowledge of paddy and garden cultivation and the planning of household architecture. Such information is learned with great care from the karanavan and younger brothers of the mother, all of whom play a part in the child's education after the age of four to five. In spite of interpersonal rivalry between men, Nayars show great loyalty to the group as a whole, pride in the military skill, dignity and financial integrity of their karanavans of past ages, and eagerness to identify with their mothers' brothers and eventually take their place as leaders of the property-group. This pride in the offices and public status of the group is of course most marked in royal lineages, [66] but

[1] [the Karanavan --- Analyst]

592 from sight behind a pillar, holding his hand be-
602 fore his mouth lest his breath should reach the hearer. [69] With younger mother's brothers more intimately responsible for his education, a youth's etiquette is necessarily relaxed, but he observes the greatest possible formal respect before them. A similar etiquette is preserved before older brothers and classificatory brothers: after puberty these never joke, sit or chew betal and areca nuts together. A junior man never sits before his senior except at mealtimes when all men may sit in the dining hall in order of age, served by women of the group who eat later in company in the kitchen. In general, age overrides generation and also segment in the formal structuring of relationships between men of a property-group: mother's mother's brother is accorded the same etiquette as mother's brother, and classificatory older brother as older brother. Emotionally, however, there tends to be less acrimony and more tenderness, as might be expected, between alternate than between proximal generations; there is also a strong tendency for own siblings to support each other against classificatory sib-
613 lings. This is part of the process of clear-cut
593 segmentation in the lineage along lines descending through sisters: it culminates regularly in quarrels between classificatory brothers and division of property between the segments. This process of segmentation throughout the whole lineage derives from the paramount strength of the mother-child bond, the key-pin of the kinship system. For both men and women,

613 no other personal relationship can override this:
593 both sexes have their permanent home with the mother throughout her life and accord her unfailing [70] reverence and affection. From this bond issues the unity of the sibling group, (9) particularly the strong tie between brother and sister which emotionally reflects the dependence of men on their mothers. With the elder sister as with the mother a man has an intimate relationship of reverence mingled with easy familiarity: the two may sit together and discuss affairs of their kin-group, and the sister early accords her brother the right to discipline her children. With her elder brother, as with her maternal uncle, after her puberty, a woman must maintain a formal etiquette of partial avoidance: she may not sit before him speak to him unasked, or be alone in a room or a house with him. Only if she gravely offends against traditional morality, he may traditionally beat her even after puberty, for a Nayar woman owes the same obedience to all older matrilineal kinsmen as a collectivity as does a woman of the patrilineal castes to her father and later her husband. Incest with the younger sister or classificatory sister or sister's daughter is a most heinous crime, formerly punishable by death, and in modern times by total ostracism by the caste and lineage. It does however occasionally take place and is evidently recognized as a temptation under matrilocal residence, hence the formal etiquette imposed to counter it.

[684]

592 In a traditional taravad, therefore, women form the core of the group: men stand on the

601 mothers" (ammaman), occasionally with prefixes "big" or "small" in the first ascending, according to age in relation to mother, and occasionally with prefixes "big oldest" and"small oldest" in the second [84] ascending, according to age in relation to grandmother. This equating of first and second generation males accords with the disciplinary powers of all older males, headed by the karanavan. Correspondingly, sister's children and sister's daughter's children are all marumakan (m.) or marumakal (f.). In ego's generation (m. and f. sp.) older brothers are addressed and referred to as jyeshtan (coll. etan); younger brothers are referred to as anujan. All men older than ego in the lineage may be referred to as karanavar (seniors); all younger as anandravar (juniors). These usages accord with the great importance of age-rank between men. For both sexes, all senior kin are addressed by terms, all juniors by name.

Women of the second ascending generation are called muthasshi ("oldest woman") with prefixes "big" or "small" according to age in relation to grandmother. In the first ascending, similarly, mother - amma, and other women are "big" or "small" mothers. In ego's generation older sisters are jyeshtathi (m. and f. sp.), younger sisters anujathi (m. and f. sp.). In addition, there are special cross-sex reference terms for "male sibling" (f. sp., age unspecified) - angala, and "female sibling" (m. sp., age unspecified) -pengal. These bring out the importance for Navars of the complementary brother-sister tie,

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601 [593] on which the unity of the sibling group and the collateral cohesion of the lineage is based.

Among female affines, the wives of men of the second and first ascending generations are ammayi (fem. of ammaman). Today, great respect is shown to these women, but they are also proverbially disliked since it is expected that they will try to obtain favours from the maternal uncles and draw away their allegiance from the Similar attitudes are shown to the EBW who has the respectful term jyeshtathi amma - "elder-sister-mother" or respected elder sister". [85] Only descriptive terms are used for the spouses of younger brothers and maternal nephews.

Among male affines, the father and step-father are called by the respectful term acchan (lit. -"lord"). Higher caste fathers are also called by their caste titles (e.g. "acchan Nambudiri"). The mother's father is muthacchan (oldest "lord"). The term acchan, like jyeshtan, anujan, jyeshtathi, anujathi, bharya=wife and barthavu=husband, are all Sanskrit terms,evidently at some time taken over from Nambudiris. The old Tamil word appan=father was reserved for the mother's tali-tier and is seldom heard today among Nayars, though it is the usual word for "father" among Nambudiris themselves and in the lower castes. Acchan was also a lineage-title accorded to some desavaris and military leaders in the traditional period; it has the connotation of high rank and political office rather than of begetting, and seems particularly appropriate for the Nayar practice of hypergamy and the fact that their lineages tended, at least in

613 644 423 The whole exogamous lineage now has over 300 members. This growth in numbers in the British period is part of the general increase in population all over Kerala; it is paralleled in many other royal and commoner lineages.

613 644 593 Within each property-group of the Zamorin's lineage, residential and economic arrangements differ somewhat from those of retainers. We may take as an example Kirakke tavari in Ernad division. This property-group contains 172 members and is the largest of the property-groups. It has a time-depth of eight generations. Most of the members live in a single [344] kovilagam (palace) in Kottakkal village. The palace is a vast block of buildings with a fort at each corner and is surrounded by a moat. Within its precincts are, apart from the residential buildings, a temple, an elementary school and a high school for children of the lineage and the Nayar children of princes, and four bathing pools. The palace has a central kitchen where food is cooked for all members, and two main wings to house men and women [91] respectively. There is separate accommodation for the Nambudiri Brahman husbands of the women, who live uxorilocally at the expense of the palace. Each prince, and each princess with her small children, has a separate suite of two rooms. Children remain with their mothers in the women's quarters until the age of 15 when the boys move into separate rooms in the men's quarters and are prohibited from visiting the women. Brother-sister avoidance is strict. If a man wishes to speak to his mother or an

613 elder sister or classificatory sister he must
644 send a messenger to call her into the common
593 hall. After the age of 15 he may not speak to a younger sister or classificatory sister, and may see them only in the distance. Contact between children and their Nambudiri fathers, as between princes and their Nambudiri brothers-in-law, is also restricted: the Nambudiris live and eat separately from the princes, served by their own Brahman servants. It is obvious that such restrictions on social relations within the palace militate against affinal and intertavari quarrels, as well as against incest.

613 On all four sides of the palace are roads lead-
644 ing into the village. This is crowded with the
361 houses of Nayar retainers, each one of which
427 is in some way connected with the palace, and leases kanam lands from it. Many dwelling-groups are those of the princes' Nayar wives and children, chiefly of the Pariccha Menon subcaste; their forbears formed the private army of the Zamorin in traditional times. Other somewhat poorer households belong to the Agattu Charna and Pallichan subcastes; both men and women work in the place, since each adult member living in it employs two Nayar servants of his or her own sex to do housework and act as messengers. The servants are still paid daily in rice.

613 [92] The lands of the kovilagam are held in the
644 name of the eldest woman, but are managed by
423 the karanavan who also receives and distributes the pensions of his group in amounts which differ according to age-rank in the group. This

113 1921), p. 241.

(11) A. I. Richards, Some Types of Family Structure amongst the Central Bantu, in African Systems of Kinship and Marriage (Radcliffe-Brown and Forde, 1950).

582 (12) Matrilateral cross cousin marriage is preferred to patrilateral, since it harmonizes the conjugal interests of a man and his sister's son, the most rivalrous relationship between men. It is also of course possible with hypergamous unions, whereas patrilateral cross cousins unions are not. In one Cochin village 7.2% of living Nayar women had married the father's own or classificatory maternal nephew; 1.6% had married the own or classificatory mother's brother's son. [103] Taking the women of six lineages over five generations, 13.9% of marriages were to the father's nephew, 9.0% to the uncle's son. In Walluvanad division, South Malabar, of the women of nine lineages over five generations, 11.2% had married the father's nephew, 4.7% the uncle's son (own or classificatory).

613 (13) In Murdock's sense of a matrilineal, matri-
•573 local unit with the husbands of the women as permanent residents. However, in a true matriclan adult male members of the matrilineage or matrisib would be living away with their wives whereas in the royal lineages princes lived at home and merely visited their wives nearby. In most naduvari and all lower subcaste lineages, women were visited only occasionally by their Nambudiri lovers who lived in their own households.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

613 592 194 It seems probable that the property groups of retainer Nayars divided somewhat earlier in their development during the nineteenth century than during the period of native rule. The reason for this is that during British rule Nayar men, having no other compulsory work, considered themselves old enough to become kāranavans by the age of thirty to forty, provided their appropriate elders were dead. In the traditional period, presumably, a man would be in arms until at least the age of fifty and would be unlikely to press for kāranavanship before that age.

613 592 161 194 [195] Further differences in the patterns of division of property groups must have arisen from the marked increase in population during British rule. This is not documented until after the 1870's but from genealogies it appears to have begun between four and five generations ago. The increase would mean that more women, and a higher proportion of women, would have had enough living children to become the founders of discrete lineage segments during their lives or shortly after their deaths. Thus property groups in the nineteenth century would divide not only at an earlier point in their structural development but also more frequently than was the case during native rule.

613 592 194 423 The absolute size of traditional property groups was limited by the amount of land available to each. It can be roughly gauged by the size of the houses they left behind. It seems unlikely that a traditional retainer property group would contain more than twenty-five to thirty people, or fewer than six.

Interpersonal Kinship Relationships

121 I describe the relationships between kinsfolk as these have existed in the recent past in the most "traditional" households, making reference to earlier periods when this is possible.

WOMAN-SON

● 593 The relationship of mother and son was the strongest in the system in the sense of mutual obligation and the expectation of mutual love. A man should place the needs of his mother above those of all other [858] kin. A woman should show equal concern for her children of both sexes, but it was expected that her primary attachment would be to her sons.

[853] [863] [869] A woman's obligations to both daughters and sons in their early childhood included breast feeding to the age of two or three, care, especially in sickness, and instruction in cleanliness and in the manners and morals of their caste.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

ners and morals of their caste. She might discipline them with slaps and scolding but was usually indulgent. She taught her children to look to her brother as their authority, and might either report their conduct to him or (more commonly) try to shield them from his correction. A woman's duties to her adult son were to assist in cooking for him, to serve him with food along with other men before she and other women had eaten, and to assist in care of the house. She should offer him counsel and comfort, respecting his wishes but attempting to dissuade him from wrong. Her own moral conduct in the village was a part of her duty to her children. If she infringed the religious laws her shame fell also on them and they were the most likely persons to be visited with supernatural vengeance. A woman should accept the suggestions of her adult son with regard to her conduct. If he became her kāranavan she theoretically owed him obedience in law.

A child should respect his mother's teaching, although strict obedience to her was not demanded before the age of five or six. Throughout her life he should revere her, remembering that he owed to her his membership of his taravād and all the birth-status rights of his caste. For her sake he should maintain right relations with his matrilineal kinsfolk, submitting to his male elders and protecting his sisters and their children. A man should protect his mother from slander or physical harm. When he entered the village after an absence he must go first to greet her. While he stayed there he should live in his natal house and make himself available to his mother's requests. He should not incur her jealousy by visiting a wife for long periods in the daytime, or by eating frequently in the house of a wife or of friends. In all things he should place his mother's comfort and the interests of the taravād above his private concerns. In her old age he must offer comfort and companionship to his mother and after death must perform funeral rites and make annual offerings on behalf of her soul. Neglect of the mother by an adult son was the height of impiety. The lineage goddess was believed to inflict sickness on an impious son.

The etiquette of behavior between mother and adult son required mutual respect and a certain restraint on both sides. Each stood when the other entered the room, although they might later sit together and converse informally. They discussed questions of property and the affairs of the taravād in serious confidence, but undignified gossip and talk touching on sexual matters were prohibited between them.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Central Kerala Nayar

WOMAN-DAUGHTER

793 A woman was her daughter's immediate mentor and moral authority throughout her life. Whereas a son entered the company of men and boys after about the age of seven, a daughter returned to her mother's [868] intimate care after the tāli rite. From her mother and from older women of the taravād a girl learned cookery, household and child care, manners, morals, and minor agricultural work. As her daughters came of age a woman took personal pride in their dress, jewelry, and [864] physical attractions. It is said that formerly mothers and other matrilineally related women instructed girls in the arts of love. A woman should spend her life in her mother's household, and she should obey her, taking over from her more and more of the household re- [769] sponsibilities. She should defend her mother in disputes with other women, offer her companionship in old age, and perform funeral and anniversary rites for her soul after her death.

A daughter replaced her mother in the social structure and was ex- [843] pected to resemble her in character, as indeed she often did. A woman's constant care for her daughter's welfare became particularly prominent during the latter's pregnancy and parturition, when the mother must be at hand to offer counsel, good food, and medicines. So long as they respected her and did not encroach on her authority, she should welcome her daughters' husbands with cordiality. If, how- [606] ever, a husband's conduct gravely displeased his mother-in-law, she [589] had the right to ask her daughter to reject him. A dutiful daughter would usually do so; if she refused, the mother might place her case before the kāranavan and request that the husband be dismissed.

Behavior between mother and daughter was usually informal, and they had few secrets from one another. In the privacy of their home and in the absence of men, matrilineally related women of today discuss their affairs and their neighbors freely, sometimes with hilarious mimicry. Mother and daughter were expected to have occasional [578] quarrels. Indeed, there was often a deep undercurrent of rivalry between them which might break out into acrimonious mutual scolding. A daughter should bear patiently her mother's reprimands, but even though she struck her mother in anger her bad conduct would be forgiven more readily than the neglect of a son. A mother would also often try to shield her daughters from anger on the part of the kāranavan, of the mother's own brothers, or even of her sons. Mother and daughters usually maintained unity in disputes with other segments of the taravād, and it was axiomatic that mother and daughters stand united in disputes with other households.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Central Kerala Nayar

MAN-SISTER

593 Within the kinship circle, a man's concern for his sisters should come second only to that for his mother. He had greater authority over them, but he owed them similar protection and consideration. If he became their kāranavan, he must manage the property on their behalf and educate their children to the best of his ability. A woman owed her brother domestic services, obedience, and devotion. Brother [581] and sister should, when necessary, subordinate their own marital interests to each other's comfort and welfare.

593 561 The elder sister shared something of the mother's role; the younger sister, that of the sister's daughter. Indeed, as in all relationships within the taravād, the significance of age surpassed that of generation; for when age and generation were discrepant the attitudes appropriate to age overrode those appropriate to generation.

A much older sister might help to bring up a boy in the same manner as the mother's younger sister. As he grew to maturity her attitude combined sharp criticism with maternal solicitude. When both were adult, however, difference of sex became a greater determinant of authority than did difference of age. Although she might continue to speak informally with him or even to upbraid him mildly, the elder sister stood in her brother's presence and received his commands with respect. If he became kāranavan, the younger brother's ultimate legal authority was unquestioned. His sister might, however, remain his trusted counselor for life.

[588] Until her tāli rite a girl played freely with her elder brothers and was affectionately patronized by them. After this time an outer formality was required between them, identical with that preserved toward the sister's daughter. Inwardly the relationship was expected to be more intense, with less authority and more tenderness on the part of the brother, less fear and more devotion on the part of the sister, and today, in speech with others, young childless women often [604] display a simple hero worship for their elder brothers. As a woman's children grew to maturity, her brother's discipline of them might [578] create tensions in the sibling relationship. She should, however, con- [586] tinue to submit willingly to his wishes. A man who was not her kāranavan had no right to dismiss his sister's husband from their home. Nevertheless, a woman who knew that her brother deeply disliked her husband would feel it her duty to reject him.

593 835 The very formal behavior required between a man and his younger sister is consciously related to incest prohibitions. Sibling incest is in fact very rare and was traditionally punished by death. Enough

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Central Kerala Nayar

cases are known in modern times however to show that the temptation was real. The reasons for the partial avoidance between men and younger women of the taravād apparently lie in the descent system. Brothers, in common with other men of the taravād, owned the procreative rights in a woman. They shared property and a home with her and were jointly the guardians of her children. With all these shared interests a strong devotion to her was axiomatic and inevitable. Yet brothers must forswear completely the sexual rights in their sister and surrender these to other men. Their formalized, partial avoidance of their younger kinswoman facilitated their continued devotion, side by side with the sexual prohibition. At the same time it completely segregated their interests in her from those of her husbands and thus made tolerable the relationships between brothers-in-law.

Life histories and the behavior of small children suggest that a man's near-conscious attraction toward his sister is a displacement of his earlier and more intense Oedipal attachment to his mother. The latter is apparently repressed at about the age of five, together with similar motives toward other older matrilineal kinswomen. It is uncertain whether Nayar boys developed Oedipal hostility toward their mothers' husbands in early childhood. Perhaps they did, for a child shared his mother's sleeping room until the age of three or four and must have witnessed parental sexual relations. If Oedipal rivalry did develop, much of the hostility seems to have been displaced toward the mother's brothers as they became the significant authorities in the child's world. There is in any case a realistic basis in the mother's brother's hard discipline for aggressive motives toward him. Mythology and religious rites suggest that these two forbidden motives—aggression toward older matrilineal kinsmen and desire for union with matrilineal kinswomen—remained powerful throughout a man's life. It is therefore easy to see why observance of the rules of formal etiquette toward older men and toward younger women of the taravād represented, for a Nayar, the essence of familial piety. The rules counteracted his deepest unsocialized impulses and made possible the harmonious coöperation of the matrilineal group. It is reasonable also to conclude that tensions arising within this natal group must have been eased by the fact that aggression and sexuality, sternly prohibited within the lineage, were encouraged outside it in warfare, organized dueling, and very free sexual relationships.

A man's hidden concern for his sister's sexuality seems to have found an approved outlet in the jealousy with which he was expected to guard her from any taint of contact with low-caste men. Organized

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Central Kerala Nayar

Organized duels as well as illegal battles between lineages seem to have been fought chiefly to vindicate a kinwoman from the unproven charge of cohabitation with a man of low caste, or to protect her from any form of obscene slander. Such approved forms of aggression against Nayars of other lineages may have provided outlets for a brother's sexual jealousy, which he might show only covertly toward his sister's socially recognized husbands. If, on the other hand, a woman were finally judged guilty of sexual relations with a man of low caste, the law permitted her brothers to vent their jealous fury by putting her and her lover to death.

BROTHERS

The relationship between brothers had much in common with that between a man and his sister's son. Age rank was of the greatest significance: even twins, or classificatory brothers born on the same day, were mutually ranked in terms of birth order, the elder preceding the younger in succession to the kāranavanship. Brothers near in age played together in early childhood, but toward adolescence their behavior became formalized to the point of partial avoidance. The elder might command the junior to do small tasks for him. A much older brother might inflict corporal punishment within the limits set by the kāranavan's authority. In general, a man's etiquette in the presence of his brother was the same as that shown to the mother's brother. A man whose elder brother was also his kāranavan treated him with even greater respect and when possible avoided his presence.

The social distance required between brothers must have been made possible by the fact that they were often absent from home, and that, when home, they had little need to coöperate in work. In modern times a man who resides with his elder brother or mother's brother usually works independently outside the taravād, spends much time in his wife's house, and restricts his intercourse with his senior to mealtimes and to formal consultations concerning their property. Unfortunately we do not know what, if any, was the structure of authority or the division of functions between brothers who traditionally fought together in war.

Great rivalry was admitted to exist in the relationship between brothers. They were thought of as bound to the taravād through their mother and sisters, rather than directly to each other. At the same time, sons of the same mother could be expected to support each other in conflicts with children of the mother's sister, while both sibling groups might experience a common resentment of their maternal uncles' authority. In broader contexts, the men of a property

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AWll Kerala AWll
Central Kerala Nayar

group supported each other firmly in disputes with other property groups of the lineage, while the men of a lineage were expected to defend each other to the death in outbreaks of violence against other lineages.

Inter-segmental conflicts between classificatory brothers, or between the men of a sibling group and their mother's classificatory brothers, eventually led to division of the taravād. This could not, however, take place until the men of all generations senior to the disputants were dead. As long as the taravād was obliged to cohere, the formalities associated with age rank between men countered incipient tendencies to segmentary fission. Men were ranked by age irrespective of segment and generation, and the same etiquette of formality and partial avoidance was due an elder own brother as to an elder classificatory brother. Thus the etiquette of age rank not only reduced the dangers of open violence between individual "brothers" of any degree of relationship; it also *enforced* estrangement and social distance between full brothers, who in some contexts might otherwise have huddled together in unseemly amity to plot against their classificatory brothers in other segments of the property group.

SISTERS

Sisters shared many experiences and interests. They played together in childhood and often experienced the tāli ceremony together. As adults they cooked, swept, pounded paddy, harvested, and cared for babies together. Women were in some respects ranked on the basis of age in the same manner as men. All who were older had some authority over all who were younger. A younger sister was not permitted to receive a visiting husband until after one had appeared to claim her elder sister's or elder classificatory sister's favors.

However, the age ranking and authority structure between women was less formal than that between men. Women had no legal authority over one another. All women of a household were legal minors, collectively under the authority of the men of their household, represented by their kāranavan. Women had no place in the caste assembly and might not give evidence in trials. Disputes between women of different households or different lineages were not considered serious matters for public consideration. Women could not legally represent their households in relationships with other households, other castes, or political authorities.

For these reasons older women had only moral authority over juniors. They could not enforce their decisions except by appeal

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AWll Kerala AWll
Central Kerala Nayar

to the kāranavan. Even in relation to small children they tended to seek the backing of a brother to maintain discipline in the home. Old women who had passed the menopause had the greatest authority. They could move freely about the village, travel alone on pilgrimages, and wield influence over their younger brothers and sons. But even old women in some contexts found themselves united with their juniors as a group of legal minors under the command of a male authority.

Under these circumstances the mutual behavior of women was intimate and informal. Their joint tasks, carried out in the confined space of the kitchen, encouraged this intimacy. Further, as natal kinswomen they were habituated to each other from birth. Unlike a woman and her daughters-in-law in a patrilineal household, their group membership was unitary and they experienced a continuity in major roles and loyalties from birth to death.

If she were competent, the oldest woman of the household delegated its tasks, allowing flexibility for seasonal variation and unusual occurrences. Generally, girls who had not reached puberty ran errands between houses, did small outdoor tasks, and played with their younger siblings. The younger married women shared the heavy work of pounding paddy, milking cows, cleaning dishes, and most of the cooking. Old women had pride of place in the kitchen and living room. They supervised cookery, occupied the best seats, and controlled their juniors' consumption of betel leaves, areca nuts, and tobacco from the family box. Elderly mothers took pride in serving their children and grandchildren with food on birthdays. In a large house young married women had considerable leisure and privileges. Through the day they took turns visiting the village bathing pool in couples, an event which gave opportunity for gossip and allowed them to be seen by (although not to converse with) the men of neighboring groups. Old women proudly distributed the taravād's jointly owned jewelry among the young and marriageable women, helped them to apply cosmetics and to dress their hair, and obtained a vicarious satisfaction from their marital conquests. For a few years —until she had several children—a young woman's life was gay and not overburdened with work. Women of childbearing age also had periods of respite from the kitchen. They were secluded in an inner room for three days during menstruation and did no household tasks for ninety days after a birth. In these conditions the division of labor was not strict and the segments descended from women were not segregated in their functions. Women wielded most control over their

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

own daughters and grandchildren, but sisters "stood in" for one another in caring for their children and contributed their work in a manner conducive to the general welfare.

Between sisters, especially own sisters, there was deep personal affection as well as loyalty to the sibling group and to the taravād. Sisters were also rivals, often squabbling over jewelry, clothing, and favors. Both rivalry and affection were most intense between sisters close in age.

Most women died in their ancestral homes among their siblings and children. Only a woman whose forebears and brothers were all dead might move away from her sisters into a separate property group headed by her son as kāranavan. Even so, sisters often lived to experience covert disputes between their children, who looked forward to the day when they would separate into new branch taravāds. In the last resort sisters would support their own children in quarrels, although they tried not to become involved in such disputes but to preserve their mutual amity.

MARRIAGE

The taravād was obviously of very great strength as an economic and legal corporation. Correspondingly, marriage was the slenderest of ties.

Every ten or twelve years, the immature girls of one generation within a lineage were ritually married on the same day by men drawn from their enangar lineages. Before the ceremony the girls were secluded for three days and caused to observe ritual prohibitions as if they had menstruated. (The actual rite of tying the tāli or gold ornament around the bride's neck is the central rite of "normal" marriage among most of the patrilineal castes of South India.) After the tāli rite, each couple was secluded for three days in a room of the ancestral house. Their seclusion clearly marked a ceremonial if not an actual defloration, and travelers' accounts of the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries indicate that the brides were actually deflowered at this time (Stanley, 1865: 24; Kerr, 1811: chap. 6; Hamilton, ed. Penzer, 1930, I: 174). During the seclusion period, rites were performed to the goddess Bhagavadi to enhance the girls' fertility. On the fourth morning each couple took a purifying bath and ate a meal together. In Calicut and Walluvanad, although apparently not in Cochin, each bridegroom then tore in two the lower cloth worn by the girl in the period of seclusion. He kept one half and handed the other to the girl. Their personal obligations ended, the bridegrooms left the household.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Central Kerala Nayar

paternity. This they did by making gifts to the woman herself and to the midwife immediately after the birth. Any man who had visited the woman in the appropriate time period was required to make these gifts. If a man refused, he could be called upon by the caste assembly to fulfill his obligation. The gifts comprised two new lower cloths for the mother and one cloth and a quantity of paddy as payment to the Nayar woman barber who attended at the delivery. Again, these gifts were clearly legal and ceremonial tokens rather than objects of substantial economic value. Legally, however, their transfer was of the utmost significance. For if no man would consent to make the delivery payments, the woman was assumed to have had sex relations with a man of lower caste or with a Muslim or a Christian. Her caste assembly would temporarily excommunicate her taravād until she and her child had been driven out by their kāranavan and the woman's funeral rites had been performed. The woman, presumably with her child, might be executed by her matrilineal kinsmen or allowed to become a slave of the district chief or the king. If the woman and her lover were publicly exposed even before the birth of the child, both might be put to death.

A woman had no obligations to her husbands other than the granting of sexual privileges. Nayar husbands of the woman's own caste occasionally dined in her household but this was a favor and not a right. Nayar households sometimes provided uncooked food and a separate building for Brahman or chiefly husbands, but this again seems to have been a matter of courtesy rather than of obligation. Husbands of higher caste made the same gifts to their wives as did Nayar husbands.

In the nineteenth century her kāranavan selected a woman's first husband, and he may have done so at earlier periods. Until the 1930's many kāranavans also retained the right to dismiss a husband who displeased them. It seems improbable, however, that a woman or her kāranavan would ever refuse the visits of a Brahman, chief, or village headman of powerful standing in the community. In some cases also a husband of higher caste seems to have monopolized the favors of a Nayar woman, a privilege not accorded to men of her own caste. K. Kannan Nair reported (1908: 186) that until a century previously local chiefs sometimes compelled a woman to receive as husbands those of her enangar who wished to marry her. In general, however, women seem to have been free to reject particular men, and both men and women to terminate liaisons without formality.

In all possible respects attempts seem to have been made to reduce

In all possible respects attempts seem to have been made to reduce 361
the intensity of marital ties for the sake of the unity of taravād, 595
village, and kingdom. Good men were men who devoted themselves 613
first to the service of their feudal lords, and second to the welfare of 577
their taravāds. Weak and immoral men were men who became in-
veigled by their wives and their children, so that they tried to make
unnecessary gifts to their wives and neglected their taravāds. An ideal
kāranavan was one who broke off his marital ties in old age and de-
voted his energies solely to his sisters' children. Institutional recogni- [593]
tion of emotional attachments between spouses was reduced to a 595
minimum. If a man by accident died in his wife's house his body was 764
immediately brought home for cremation by his lineage kin. After a 613
man's death his current wives were permitted to come and view his
corpse. They were then ceremonially conducted out from the north
side of the house—the side opposite to that from which the god of
death had come. They must not look back at the house of death and
they might never visit it again. They and their children took no part
in the funeral or the subsequent anniversary rites nor did they observe
death pollution.

In spite of the institutional precautions, undoubtedly some men 595
formed strong emotional attachments to particular wives and their 754
children. The institution of sorcery came into play at this point 613
(Gough, 1958). Among Nayars, sorcery was practiced mainly against 593
affines; it was ineffectual within the lineage. It was believed to be
practiced most by junior members of a taravād against the matrilineal
kin of their kāranavan's wife. The reason was that if he were particu-
larly attached to a wife, the juniors of a kāranavan might fear that he
would transfer to her gifts and cash which belonged legally to his
taravād. They could not make their complaint in law, for the
kāranavan was their legal representative. Instead, they are said to
have secretly engaged low-caste practitioners to recite spells and
make offerings to some minor malevolent deity with the object of
bringing sickness upon the wife or her kin. If they suspected such
evil doing, the members of the wife's taravād might in turn hire a
"good" practitioner of their own who would appeal to some other
deity to return the misfortune to the senders. It is clear that Nayars
did hire "good" practitioners to perform countermagic against af-
fines; whether in fact they hired evil practitioners to perform sorcery
in the first place is uncertain. At all events the institution of sorcery [54]
provided a covert outlet for interpersonal hostilities between affines
which could find no expression in open conflicts between their groups
as a whole. The result of the hostilities was often termination of the [586]

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Central Kerala Nayar

particular marriage, for the spouses, unable to bear the machinations of their relatives, would often end their relationship.

I have called these Nayar institutions "marriage" because they limited and regulated sexual relationships and because they served to legitimize children. The provisions of both the tāli rite and the sambandham were directed toward these ends. The tāli rite was both a legal and a ritual institution. First, it symbolically conferred sexual and procreative powers upon the girl. The mock menstrual seclusion, the rites to the fertility goddess, and the "defloration" all indicate this. Second, it took the sexual rights in a girl away from her matrilineal kinsmen as soon as they had been conferred. This appears in that the girl and her elder matrilineal kinsmen must observe the rules of etiquette associated with incest prohibitions from the day of the tāli rite. Third, it transferred the sexual (but not the procreative) rights in the girl to a representative of her caste in the person of an enangan. Fourth, however, this man at once renounced his rights in his capacity as an individual, after which they became available to men of the caste, and of appropriate higher castes, as a group. All of this was accomplished in good time *before* the girl actually attained puberty and was capable of entering fruitfully into sexual liaisons. It was strictly forbidden for a man to have relations with a girl before her tāli rite, and if the rite was not performed before puberty she was expelled from caste.

With regard to the sambandham institution, sex relations were not promiscuous. They were forbidden within the lineage, within a certain range of affines (discussed below), and, most categorically, with men of lower caste. It was therefore necessary to have some procedure for legitimizing children, to show that they had been fathered by men standing in the appropriate roles. The legally obligatory payments by husbands at the time of birth accomplished this, and if no one could be found to make the payments, the woman and child were expelled from the caste.

It was appropriate that a woman should wear the tāli throughout her life and that she and her children should observe death pollution for the ritual husband rather than for any particular visiting husbands. For neither the ritual husband nor the visiting husbands had rights in the woman *as individuals*, nor had the woman or her children individual rights in them. After renouncing his individual rights, however, the ritual husband remained for life, in relation to this woman, the representative of his caste, which in law had collectively married her and collectively fathered her children.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AWll Kerala AWll
Central Kerala Nayar

As a form of group marriage, the Nayar institutions clearly will not fit the definition of marriage proposed in *Notes and Queries in Anthropology*.[9] It did, however, legitimize children, which seems to me the minimum necessary criterion applicable to all those unions which anthropologists customarily label "marriage." As a new definition of marriage which will cover all the familiar types, the Nayar case, and several other unusual cases which are commonly recognized as marriage, I have suggested the following: "Marriage is a relationship between a woman and one or more other persons which provides that a child born to the woman, under circumstances not prohibited by the rules of the relationship, shall be accorded full birth-status rights in his society or social stratum" (Gough, 1959: 32).

Nayar men seem always to have chosen wives younger than themselves. A man ranked above his wife, who had to show respect to him. In the presence of her kin she remained standing before him and seldom spoke to him; she would not be seen talking to him in public outside her home. A woman never used her husband's name; she addressed and referred to him by plural honorific pronouns. Hypergamous marriage relationships were even more formal than those between Nayars. Caste rules of pollution prevented the husband from receiving food from his wife's kinsfolk. During the daytime, after taking his purifying bath in the morning, he was forbidden to touch her or any member of her family.

THE FATHER AND HIS KIN

The most peculiar characteristic of the Central Nayars is that although a form of marriage existed they did not institutionalize the elementary family of one man, one woman, and their children. This group was in no sense a legal, residential, commensal, productive, or distributive unit. An individual man had no legal rights in a particular wife and her children. He did not reside with them, did not eat regularly with them, did not produce with or for them, and he did not customarily distribute goods to his children. A woman had no legal rights in a particular man—only the right that one *or more* men admit paternity of her children. Similarly, a child correctly begotten was assured of legal paternity, but a group of men might fulfill this role and the child had no subsequent claims on any of them. It might perhaps be claimed that the group composed of the tāli tier, his ritual wife, and her children born subsequently received cere-

[9] "Marriage is a union between a man and a woman such that children born to the woman are the legitimate offspring of both parents" (*Notes and Queries*, 1951: 110).

2: Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949) 1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Central Kerala Nayar

595 monial recognition through the performance of death pollution, but that was strictly all.

842 Nayars did, however, understand and attach significance to the physiological role of the male in procreation. They expected a child [829] to resemble his genitor and to be unusually intelligent if his father were a Brahman or a Nayar aristocrat. A man is said to have been 593 especially fond of a child whom he knew with reasonable certainty to be his own. He would make small gifts to him, play with him on visits, and offer him friendly counsel as he grew older. However, a man had no right to interfere in any way in his child's training, and [586] the child had no customary obligations to him. If he ended his relationship with the mother he had no further contact with the child.

Children addressed all their mothers' husbands as acchan, adding [601] the caste title in the case of a father of higher caste. Both boys and [564] girls stood in the father's presence and accorded him respect, but without the extreme submissiveness due to an older matrilineal kinsman. In spite of the Malayāli adage "No Nayar knows his father," it seems probable that almost every Nayar regarded some particular man as his genitor; but his relationship with this man might be anything from a permanent, warm attachment to almost total lack of recognition. Certainly differences of paternity created no institutionalized divisions within a sibling group.

602 No rights or obligations existed between an individual and his patrilateral kin. These relationships, when they existed, were a matter of individual friendliness or of polite etiquette. A person might visit his or her father's taravād as long as the father's marriage [595] to the mother endured, especially if the father lived close by. However, although marriage has been monogamous for the past seventy to eighty years, I found in one Cochin village in 1949 that only 48 per cent of sibling groups containing children under fifteen had any contact with their father's matrilineal kin. In the other cases patrilateral relationships were suspended because the father lived at a distance, because he had divorced the mother, or because his kinswomen had quarreled with the mother.

[601] In what follows, the term "father" refers to any husband of the mother in the sambandham relationship, and the term "patrilateral kin," to the matrilineal kin of such a man.

Patrilateral kin of the father's generation or older were accorded [605] friendly respect. Cross cousins of the same sex and caste had a familiar, mildly joking relationship if they maintained contact with one another. If their families remained friendly, cross cousins of

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Central Kerala Nayar

613 597 eage with which one was neither at enmity nor in regular asymmetrical political relationships. Thus the Travancore royal lineage several times adopted from Kolattiri, at the other end of Kerala, and the Calicut lineage from Nileswaram, the northernmost independent chiefdom of the Malabar Coast.

613 262 564 The giving and receiving of food, normally a hallmark of caste ranking, presented other problems. Some royal lineages were vegetarians and employed Nambudiri Brahman cooks who, being ritually higher than themselves, were permitted to serve them with food. Others seem to have drawn to themselves a small group of lineages as cooks and houseservants upon whom they conferred equivalence of caste rank, while maintaining them as their social inferiors and not intermarrying with them.

613 RESIDENCE AND KINSHIP RELATIONSHIPS

592 593 554 The property groups of village headmen's and chiefly lineages had residential arrangements similar to those of retainer Nayars, except that their houses were larger. The men of these groups visited their lower-ranking wives in the latters' homes. If they lived nearby, visits would occur at night; if at a distance, the husband might visit his wife about once a month and remain for two or three days. Similarly, women of these groups received visits from their higher-ranking husbands at convenient intervals. If he came from a distance the husband brought his own servants and cook, occupied a building near the taravād house, and stayed at his conjugal family's expense.

613 344 554 592 In the royal lineages each property group occupied a large palace. Within it each princess had her own suite of rooms in company with her children under the age of fifteen. Princes over this age had private rooms in a separate wing. The Nambudiri Brahman husbands of princesses (who were younger sons in their own households and had no managerial duties) lived at the palace for the duration of their marriages and were maintained at its expense. In the daytime they occupied a building within the royal courtyard, with its own bathing pool, kitchen, and servants, and visited their wives' rooms mainly at night. Junior princes visited their wives in nearby retainers' households or in more distant chiefly taravāds. Each royal sthāni had his own palace, estate, and retainers for the duration of his office. He would normally bequeath a house to a Nayar wife within the palace grounds and visit her and his children there.

595 554 [586] Although group marriage appears to have existed in theory among aristocrats, polyandry was in fact perhaps less common than among retainer Nayars. Princesses are said to have been sometimes poly-

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AWll Kerala AWll
Central Kerala Nayar

androus and divorce was freely practiced, but a princess probably did not regularly entertain more than one husband at a time. Older Nambudiri Brahman husbands often introduced their own younger kinsmen into the palace; for this reason both matrilateral cross-cousin marriage and paternal parallel-cousin marriage were common in Brahman-royal unions. Princes, chiefs, and high-ranking Nambudiri Brahmans were sometimes polygynous. Their wives, however, were probably seldom polyandrous; for aristocrats seem often to have exercised the power to monopolize the attentions of their favorite Nayar wives. They were therefore more sure of the paternity of their Nayar sons, upon whom they sometimes conferred military or political offices.

In all hypergamous unions the husband observed the normal all-India caste rules of pollution except with regard to sexual intercourse. He might not receive food from his wife's caste and had little communication with her or her children in the daytime. Affinal relationships were correspondingly more restricted than in the retainer castes, for a woman had very little communication with her husband's natal kin; she and her children used no kinship terms for them. If the wife was of lower social as well as ritual rank than the husband she did not visit his natal home. Conversely, princesses do not seem to have demeaned themselves socially by visiting the homes of their ritually higher-ranking husbands. A Nayar wife who was of similar social rank to her Brahman or temple-servant husband might occasionally visit the womenfolk of his home, but she was received in an outbuilding and might not eat with them. Similarly, husbands in hypergamous unions had highly formalized and restricted relationships with the matrilineal kinsmen of their wives. The wives' elder kinsmen were accorded the respect due their age; the husband, that due his superior ritual rank.

Relationships between matrilineal kin among the aristocrats were a sharpened version of those found among retainer Nayars. Between men, the etiquette associated with age rank was highly stereotyped. Among the senior princes who were likely to compete for political office it reached the point of avoidance, a condition facilitated by their separate residences as sthānis. The etiquette of respect was similarly elaborated between men and women. After the age of fifteen a prince might converse with older women of his palace only by appointment and in some public place. He must scrupulously avoid the presence of younger kinswomen from the time of their *tāli* rite. In the potentially larger property groups of the aristocrats these rules of etiquette obviously militated against the expression of aggression between men as well as preventing incestuous relations between the sexes.

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AWll Kerala AWll
North Kerala Nayar

tween them also permitted the observance of the type of very formal etiquette that existed in the Central kingdoms.

A peculiarity of strict avunculocal residence is that it separates a woman from both her sons and her daughters after they are married. The sons return to their ancestral estates and the daughters leave with their husbands. The relationships of mother and children were therefore less continuous than in Central Kerala. However, various particular arrangements did often permit women to live with some of their children for a great part of their lives. Cross-cousin marriage was one of these. Matrilateral cross-cousin marriage was the most popular, because by this means the daughter of a kāranavan and his wife could be brought into their dwelling group as the wife of the kāranavan's nephew. Patrilateral cross-cousin marriage was also popular but less common.[1] It was less advantageous unless a shift from the normal residential arrangements could be made. This sometimes occurred when a kāranavan succeeded in arranging a marriage between his son and his sister's daughter. The son might then remain on his father's ancestral estate for part of his life in patrilocal residence. Any property which he developed there would pass to his wife's descendants as matrilineal heirs of the estate. In this way a woman might keep one of her sons living with her for a large part of her life.

Women were also commonly reunited with their sons at divorce or widowhood, for they would then return to their taravāds to live. Whatever the circumstances of residence, moreover, a man should place his duties to mother and sisters above those to wife and children. The ideals of devotion and reverence to matrilineal kinswomen were the same as in Central Kerala. Brother and sister were drawn apart by the normal rules of residence but, like mother and son, came together if the sister were divorced or widowed and returned to her taravād. A woman also returned to her taravād for several months at the time of childbirth, for every child had to be born in its own Taravād.

[1] In the Kottayam village already cited, 12 per cent of Nambiar commoner women who had been married had at some time married their father's own or classificatory sister's son; 8 per cent had married their own or classificatory maternal uncle's son. Cross-cousin marriage is, as everywhere in Kerala, more common among the aristocratic lineages of village headmen and chiefs. Of the women of six village headmen's lineages over a period of five generations, 17 per cent had married their father's own or classificatory sister's son, and 13 per cent their own or classificatory maternal uncle's son. Patrilateral cross-cousin marriage is thus more usual in North than in Central Kerala. One reason for this is that fathers in North Kerala more commonly educate and endow their sons. By this means a father acquires the right to a voice in arranging his son's marriage, often to the father's niece.

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AWll Kerala AWll
North Kerala Nayar

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574 taravād. A woman might also visit for several weeks each year.
[593] Brother and younger sister, like a man and his sister's daughter, ob-
[604] served rules of partial avoidance—associated with incest prohibitions—during their periods of co-residence.

591 Sisters were always separated upon marriage, for the Nayars of
582 this area, unlike those to the south, forbade the marriage of two brothers to two sisters. They say that such marriages would endanger the unity of the brothers' taravād by introducing into it too strong a
613 contingent from another lineage (Gough, 1952). Sisters were together,
591 however, during childhood in their father's house, and were often
[593] reunited in old age when they went back to the taravād. Although they might seldom have stayed there during childhood and early
[763] youth, women seem usually to have died in their matrilineal an-
[586] cestral homes. A woman was often widowed in old age. Alternatively she might elect to leave her husband and return to her taravād and
[764] sons when her period of childbearing was ended. In any case a woman's body had to be cremated and her funeral rites performed in the garden of her taravād house.

Women in avunculocal residence were partly maintained by their
[431] husbands' taravāds in return for domestic services. Nevertheless, important distributive ties persisted between them and their matrilineal kinsmen. Usually their kāranavan sent quantities of grain and clothing to them and their children twice annually after the harvests as part of their maintenance.

585 MARRIAGE
[582] Following the tāli rite, a girl entered into a marriage relationship (sambandham) with one man at about the age of eleven. The father's sister's son, if of suitable age, was considered the rightful claimant.
[686] If the girl did not marry him her kāranavan must pay a token fine to him at the marriage ceremony. The giving of the cloth by the husband which marked the start of a sambandham was carried out with ceremony in the girl's ancestral house and was the occasion for a large feast to relatives of both parties. After the marriage had been consummated in the girl's house the couple were ceremonially conducted to the bridegroom's taravād and the girl was formally received into it by her husband's mother and his kāranavan's wife.

[684] While a marriage endured the husband had exclusive rights in his
[848] wife's sexuality. If he detected her in adultery he might by custom kill her lover, cut off the hair of his wife, and send her home after divorce. A woman was not, however, excommunicated from caste

and her children were not illegitimate unless she had relations with a man of low caste.

A woman normally lived with her husband in his ancestral home or in a separate house on his ancestral land. He then owed her physical protection and at least a part of her food and clothing, in return for limited domestic services. Occasionally a man might choose to visit his wife in her ancestral home if she lived nearby. In this case he might work on her ancestral land or bring periodic provisions of grain and clothing to her and her children. He would eat sometimes in his ancestral house and sometimes in the house of his wife. In all marriages a husband was obliged to pay the full expenses of delivery when his wife bore a child in her ancestral home and, additionally, to supply grain and other food to her throughout the six months which she spent in her taravād at this time.

A woman owed respect and obedience to her husband. He had the right to scold or even to beat her if she disregarded his wishes. Polygyny was permitted and was fairly common among village headmen, chiefs, and royalty. The polygynous husband usually provided separate houses for his wives on his ancestral estate.

Theoretically, either party might divorce the other at will, but in fact it was usually the husband who initiated a divorce. We do not know how common divorce was in the traditional period. At present it is rare in wealthy landowning lineages, although it probably takes place rather more frequently than among aristocratic Mappillas of North Kerala. It is more usual among the poorer Nambiar commoners, although probably less frequent than among the poorer Tiyyars of this area.

Widows might remarry freely by traditional law. Today it is somewhat rare for a widow to remarry if she has children under the age of three or four; we do not know whether this was the case traditionally. A widow who does remarry almost invariably leaves her children by the first marriage behind in her taravād, in the care of her mother or some other older natal kinswomen. Such children may visit their mother in their stepfather's house but they have no customary rights of maintenance there, and it is considered that their own taravād is the correct place for them to live.

Thus in North Kerala, by contrast with Central Kerala, differences of paternity may create structural divisions among the children born of one mother. All are of the same taravād and share the same fundamental birth-status rights, but if their fathers were different they

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AWll Kerala AWll
North Kerala Nayar

will have had different life experiences. One set of siblings may receive property from their father in which their maternal half-siblings have no legal rights. Each set of full siblings will have important relationships with its own paternal kin. In many respects, therefore, children of the same mother by different fathers have a relationship more comparable to that of the children of two sisters than to that which obtains between full siblings. However, the ties between maternal half-siblings are much stronger than those between paternal half-siblings, who have only a slight relationship. At best, it may be comparable to that between paternal parallel cousins; at worst it may be one of open hostility.

A woman's claims on her husband's taravād ceased absolutely with his death. As in Central Kerala, a widow was ceremonially conducted out of her husband's house immediately after the death and could not enter it thereafter. Husband and wife did not observe death pollution and did not take part in each other's funeral rites.

Hypergamous marriages in aristocratic lineages bore some resemblance to those in Central Kerala, although they were never polyandrous. Brahman husbands of royal or chiefly women lived matrilocally at the expense of the palace as in Central Kerala. Royal and chiefly men, however, brought their lower-ranking wives to live on their estates in avunculocal residence. The wife and her children occupied a separate house or else a wing of the palace with separate cooking arrangements. Husband and wife observed rules of ritual pollution as in hypergamous marriages in the Central kingdoms.

THE FATHER AND HIS KIN

The kāranavan held ultimate legal control over all his juniors, but their fathers had limited customary rights in and obligations to them. A man was expected to care for his children in his home until they reached puberty or married. Although their own taravād had a legal obligation to maintain them in food and clothing, the father's taravād customarily supplied their day-to-day needs as a matter of pride. The father was expected to train his small children in manners and morals, to see that they were taught to write, and to give his sons instruction in cultivation. In return he could ask his children to do small tasks, could exercise domestic discipline while they stayed with him, and could expect kindness and occasional help from them when he was old. His consent had to be sought for his children's marriages and he often arranged the marriage of his daughter, although he could not override her kāranavan's wishes. Over and above their customary

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

obligations, some fathers, especially kāranavans, kept their children residing with them for most of their lives and gave them property. A child owed his father obedience and respect. If a man divorced his wife her children also left him and might see little of him thereafter. However, they had to observe ritual pollution at his death and his eldest son took part in his funeral rites along with the chief matrilineal heir. The eldest son also made annual offerings to his dead father's spirit. In general the relationship with the father was thought of as intimate and loving. Children must respect him and a daughter must not touch him after her puberty. But having no legal authority, the father was not feared. His role was sharply contrasted with that of the mother's brother. Uncles were said to teach by scolding and punishment; fathers, by persuasion and laughter.

The father's kin had privileges and obligations at life-crisis rites—most of which took place in the individual's taravād house—and were feasted and made gifts at the ceremonies of first pregnancy, naming, first rice feeding, tāli tying, marriage, first menstruation, and death. At the naming ceremony, when a baby was one month old, the father's mother chose the name, the father's father conferred it, and the father presented the child with a gold waistband. The käranavan fulfilled these roles in Central Kerala.

A person was forbidden to marry his father's sibling or paternal parallel cousin of the father's property group. Affectionate respect was the proper attitude toward all the father's older kin. The paternal grandmother played with a child but did not idolize him as she did her daughter's child, for he was not of her taravād. Unless he was also a child's käranavan, the paternal grandfather was a distant kinsman who had little to do with his grandchild. The mother's father, on the other hand, usually doted on his grandchild and was a cherished companion.

Male cross cousins had a joking relationship and were often close companions. Their relationship might be tinged with hostility concerning the property of their respective father and mother's brother. Sometimes, at least in the nineteenth century, they quarreled openly over the inheritance and became enemies thereafter. Male and female cross cousins had a joking relationship with implicit sexual privileges if the girl was younger than the man. A boy who returned to his taravād at puberty often married his matrilateral cross cousin thereafter. Even if she married someone else he might sleep with her illicitly before or after the marriage. Elders were either ignorant or

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AWll Kerala AWll
North Kerala Nayar

605 836 837 oblivious of these affairs. If the husband found out he might keep quiet or might divorce his wife, but he would not be likely to take vengeance.

AFFINES

602 576 184 The etiquette of behavior between affines was practically identical in North and Central Kerala, but in the North they had recognized obligations.

602 592 613 [593] During her marriage a woman became partly integrated into her husband's property group. Her husband could request her to cook and do limited domestic work for any of his matrilineal kin. She would do so regularly if she lived in an avunculocal extended family. In such households there was a certain authority structure between the wives of matrilineally related men, based on the relative age of the husbands. The oldest woman directed the group and the younger ones should obey her. Matters went most smoothly when a woman was the mother of her husband's niece-in-law. Older women in avunculocal households did not, however, have the unequivocal authority over junior wives which is found in the patrilocal extended families of the higher patrilineal castes of India. They would never beat a girl and usually courted her affection. If the young wife was dissatisfied she might urge her husband to move to a separate house, go home for long periods, or even seek a divorce.

In strict avunculocal residence the kāranavan's wife had domestic authority, keeping the keys of storerooms and directing the younger wives. However, if any woman born into the taravād returned to live in it she could demand the internal management of the home as [598] a right. The relations between a woman and her husband's sisters and nieces were thus often strained. Soon after such a natal kinswoman [607] returned to her home in this way, the kāranavan would try to move his [604] wife into a separate building to avoid feminine disputes. However, a younger wife often lived for several years in the same house with her husband's widowed mother and was expected to obey her with good grace.

602 613 A woman and her husband's older matrilineal kinsmen avoided one another—except on ceremonial occasions—because of incest prohibitions. She was accorded meticulous respect by her husband's younger matrilineal kin, who usually feared and resented her influence over her husband. Gruesome proverbs told of the tortures which men and women would like to inflict on the wives of their elder brothers and [604] uncles, and it was said that "If the uncle's wife and nephews sit down peaceably together, *nux vomica* and bitter gourds will turn to honey."

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

accumulating religious merit against the life to come. With regard to their interests in this world, the ancestors resemble their descendants.

Lineage ghosts are powerful beings who can help or harm the living. The effect which they exert on the fortunes of the living is much greater than that exerted by the living on their own. They can aid their descendants by preserving crops, cattle, houses, and children, but their punitive characteristics are those most emphasized. Offerings to ghosts are designed less toward seeking positive good than toward averting misfortune. There is no idealization of the ghosts as morally superior beings. They are human in their failings of envy and bad temper, and indeed, even more capricious than the living. They may punish wrongdoing with a degree of justice, but they do not look sympathetically into the hearts of propitiants, and are almost as likely to exact vengeance for accidental mistakes in the performance of rites as for wilful immorality. Nāyars do not attempt to enter intimate spiritual communion with them or to please them by inner suffering and renunciation. Rather, the ghosts are bought off with gifts of food in order that their envy may be appeased.

These attitudes to the ancestors[13] are, it seems, directly related to relationships with the senior generation among the living. A man's relationship with his mother's brother is, from childhood, one of stern discipline. All mother's brothers have authority over their nephews and in traditional households may inflict corporal punishment on adolescents. There is a marked lack of intimacy between senior and junior men within the *taravād*, and the sanction on a nephew's good conduct is fear of punishment rather than fear over loss of love. Good *kāranavans* are devoted to their juniors in a stern and dutiful manner. They are proud of their *taravād* as against the rest of the world, but they do not exhibit personal tenderness to their juniors. Power is vested in the senior generation; there is little feeling that a nephew could wield power over his uncle by withdrawing his emotional support. Great emphasis is placed on a formal etiquette of dignified and respectful behavior, amounting to partial avoidance, but neither party need feel that he loves the other in his heart. Nephews will not normally readily reveal hostility toward their uncles before outsiders, for they wish to preserve the dignity of the *taravād*. But they do publicly acknowledge hostility under provocation, and more frequently accuse the uncle of aggression toward themselves. That hostility is a normal component of relationships with mother's brothers is proverbial among Nāyars. They recognize this as the reason why a formal etiquette of behavior is indispensable. And even in spite of the stringent rules regulating the intercourse of mother's brother and sister's son, physical aggression between them may occur. In spite of the supernatural sanctions against violence within the lineage, I heard several stories of nephews who poisoned or stabbed their mothers' brothers. Aged *kāranavans* of large *taravāds* often complain of their loneliness. They may not behave intimately with their juniors and know in their hearts that they are hated and envied. "Indeed," as one Nāyar remarked, "in an old-fashioned *taravād* the position of the *kāranavan* is not safe." The office of *kāranavan* is, of course, much coveted. Junior men commonly number themselves off in order of age-rank as second, third, fourth men, etc., and with divided feelings await the demise of those above them which will raise them to higher rank. The relationship between older and younger brothers, own or classificatory, is only slightly less stern and formal than that between mother's brother and sister's son.

The relationship of a woman with her mother's brother is less harsh than that

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

between males, for a woman does not offer the threat of a rival to her male superior. Difference of sex, however, makes this relationship even more formal than that between men. Women do not appear frequently in the presence of their mothers' brothers. They occupy separate wings of the house, and intercourse between the sexes is severely restricted. Toward older brothers a woman's relationship is restricted almost to the point of avoidance. If she commits a misdemeanor, especially a sexual one, a woman immediately fears men senior to her in the *taravād*. Formerly, she might be executed by her brothers if she had sexual relations with a lower caste man. In an orthodox household today, a girl who becomes pregnant by a low caste man will be either expelled from the house by her male seniors or, at best, will be thrashed and will receive much subsequent harsh treatment.

It may be wondered why, since women are excluded from legal authority and from participation in the cult, ancestresses are believed capable of harming *taravād* members. The explanation of this, too, seems to lie in the content of relationships with the mother and other natal kinswomen. Women have no legal authority over their juniors. Indeed, the mother of a *kāranavan* is herself under his jurisdiction. Women do, however, exercise great moral authority over their children throughout their lives. In Cochin with duolocal residence, the care of children under about the age of five is almost entirely in the hands of women in a traditional *taravād*. Their fathers have no rights over them, the *kāranavan* is too remote a figure to concern himself with details of child training, and junior men of the *taravād* are often absent from home. A mother commonly treats her small children with indulgence, but is necessarily also the source of many frustrations, while the maternal grandmother and women of her generation are strict disciplinarians.

In Kottayam, where residence was traditionally avunculocal, children were frequently brought up in the *taravād* of the father. In such households today, the child has an intimate, affectionate relationship with his father who undertakes a part of his personal care. When the father's *kāranavan* is also the mother's father (as fairly often occurs with cross-cousin marriage), he and his wife treat the child with indulgence. Otherwise, they tend to have only a slight relationship with him and may even resent his claim to temporary hospitality in their house. The mother is, in these circumstances, again the child's chief mentor and disciplinarian, and he learns very early that his mother's brothers, though living elsewhere, are the real authorities whom he must respect and to whom he will return at adolescence, as their heir. In both areas the reverence acquired for the mother is perpetuated throughout life. Her wishes and those of his elder sister take precedence over those of a man's wife, to whom he has a very subsidiary attachment. The relationship with the mother is clearly characterized by great depth of emotion and by greater tenderness than that toward male seniors. Even so, it appears that in this relationship too, the emotion is usually consciously ambivalent. I illustrate this statement briefly with reference to the relationship between only one man and his mother, but it is characteristic of many. This Cochin Nāyar, aged thirty-five, visited us stealthily in the evenings and kept his visits from his mother, telling her he had business in the town. He was afraid she would become jealous, and angry with him for eating Christian food. She watched over him, upbraiding him when he spent much time in the house of his wife and children. He took care to be prompt for meals, and although he found her food inadequate he would not complain in case he appeared to slight her cookery. He had had a high

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Nayar

159 school education and disbelieved in much traditional Nāyar ritual. Yet he once
593 arranged for the performance of a sacrifice to a minor malevolent deity, Kuttichāttan, because his mother thought that this demon had killed their calf. On this occasion he complained that he found her control irksome, and wished he had younger brothers who would care for her and allow him to travel more. "I love *and* fear her," he said, "Sometimes I am angry with her." "But you don't say anything?" "Ah, no, nothing!"
593 Far more than in most of the patrilineal castes of South India, therefore, a man's
769 mother remains the supreme, if somewhat resented, moral authority. There is no wonder that after death a woman should be believed capable of punishing her children and grandchildren if they displease her.

769 Even so, ancestresses play only a minor part in the cult of forebears, subordinate,
613 as in life, to the spirits of *kāranavans*. For the cult of lineage ghosts too closely re-
776 sembles everyday adult relationships in the *taravād* for women to be accorded a paramount place within it. In religion, the supreme moral authority of the mother
593 finds its expression rather in the cult of the goddess Bhagavadi. Bhagavadi is lifted above the sphere of kinship relationships, yet as patron of the *taravād* and the village she is stated to be the supernatural counterpart of the mother. Her attributes are more awesome and archaic than are those of ancestresses, and it seems probable that in her are portrayed very early infantile fantasies of the mother, corresponding to those of the period when she was the only significant object in the child's world. She inspires devotion and tenderness but, in her aspect as Bhādrakāli, she is also a horrendous demon, having snakes for hair, talons for fingernails, fangs for teeth, brandishing weapons in her arms, and with her mouth dripping blood. Her oral aggression is emphasized, for she is a devourer of male demons who dare to oppose her power. Bhagavadi is the great deity of both men and women among Nāyars, but she is more concerned with men than with women. She is the goddess of war, she possesses men more frequently than women, and it is men who devote themselves intensively to
769 her cult. Ancestresses, on the other hand, seem to be somewhat more likely to attack
593 women than men. The different relationships of men and of women to their mothers may be relevant in this connection. For a woman, the relationship with the mother is less awesome, less inspiring, more intimate and realistic but also more irksome and
[613] rivalrous than for a man. A woman replaces her mother in the *taravād*, and as she grows up, rivalry, including sexual rivalry, is often apparent between them. Women retain the right to administer corporal punishment to their daughters until adolescence or marriage, whereas men earlier pass under the discipline of their mothers' brothers and appear to retain a more childlike image of the mother. Nuances in the cult of the ancestors and the great deities appear to reflect this differential relationship of men and women to the senior generation.

184 In Kottayam, with avunculocal residence, fathers traditionally had a protective
593 and intimate relationship with their children. It might be expected that the father's
769 ghost would figure in some way in the cult of ghosts. This is not the case. The cults
613 are practically identical in Kottayam and Cochin, and although a woman and her immature children in Kottayam lived in the house of the woman's husband, the husband's lineage ghosts were not believed capable of affecting their welfare. This is apparently because, both in Kottayam and Cochin, the ancestor cult mirrors the legal structure and collective responsibility of the *taravād*, which are identical in the two areas. The father's ghost has no place among the lineage ghosts because,

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however intimately related to his children he may have been, he belongs to a different economic and legal corporation. In death as in life, he has no publicly supported authority over his children. Children do have a personalized relationship with their father's spirit in Kottayam, however, which is discussed below.

The emotional content of the relationships with lineage ghosts among the Nāyars does not depend upon the fact that they follow matrilineal descent, although of course the role-structure of the cult is determined by this fact. The Īravas[13] of this area, who are tenant cultivators of lower rank than the Nāyars, have small patrilineal lineages and patrilocal extended families, cross-cut, traditionally, by dispersed exogamous matrilineal clans. The Īrava patrilineage is called a *taravād* and is headed by its senior male member as *kāranavan*. The Īravas have a cult of dead patrilineal *kāranavans* almost identical in emotional and belief content with that of Nāyars. So also do the Coorgs, a patrilineal caste of the small province east of Kottayam, well described by Srinivas.[14] The common form of the cult and the similarity of detail in this general area must undoubtedly be attributed to diffusion or to a common historical origin. Nevertheless, the question then arises of why this cult was not diffused to all castes of the southwest coast, notably to the Brahmans. Conversely, we may ask why the Brahmanical cult of ancestors, which is quite different in form and content, did not entirely replace the ancestral cults of the non-Brahman castes centuries ago—for these castes have been exposed to Brahmanical culture probably for two thousand years and have in fact adopted many elements of that culture. Moreover, cults of punitive ancestors similar to the Nāyar cult are very widespread in the world. It seems certain that whatever their historical origin, the reasons for the perpetuation of these cults must be sought in the role-structure of the kinship system and the emotional content of relationships with major figures of the senior generation within it. I would suggest that cults of predominantly punitive ancestors are likely to be accompanied by kinship relationships in which the senior generation retains control over the junior until late in life, but in which major figures of the senior generation are not highly idealized. It seems probable that the chief sanction against value-violating behavior will be fear of some tangible form of punishment, rather than fear over loss of love, and that although open expression of aggression toward disciplinary figures is controlled, the aggressive component in the ambivalent relationship to seniors will be strong and not deeply repressed. Among Nāyars and Īravas of my acquaintance, at all events, a man may even be conscious of his ambivalence toward seniors, and to the extent that he is not able fully to accept his own aggressive feelings he seems to project these in the belief that his superiors are even more punitive than they may really be. A portion of this projected aggression his culture encourages him to displace on the figures of lineage ghosts, who can inflict even more serious punishments than can living superiors. As is frequently the case in our own society, the mechanism of projection seems to be closely allied with that of introjection, which appears in the belief that sickness and mental derangement are caused by the entry of a hostile ghost into the body of the patient.

The nature of traditional Nāyar relationships to their lineage ghosts may be clarified by contrasting them with those of Brahmans. I choose for this purpose the Tamil Brahmans of Tanjore,[15] with whom I am best acquainted. This caste of landowners and ritual specialists has patrilocal extended families and patrilineal lineages. Headship of the extended family does not, as among Īravas and Coorgs, pass down the line of

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father is highly ambivalent; for as head of the family he is the source of many frustrations. After death, aggressive elements do seem to appear covertly in the horrifying picture of hell and in the fear that by failing to perform the ancestral rites correctly, and to live piously, the son may imperil his ancestors' souls. But aggression against the parents seems to be too deeply repressed for them to be thought of, alive or dead, as themselves aggressive. Instead, the Brahman seems to effect a reaction formation against his aggression which appears in unusual concern for the ancestors' safety, and in the anxious need to perform numerous rites which will ward off from them the punishment of the god of death. I do not mean to suggest that every Brahman handles aggression toward elders solely and precisely in this way, or that every Nāyar handles the same troublesome impulses by projection. I would suggest, however, that both socialization and belief system encourage these different modes of handling aggression toward authorities, and that a change in any one of these areas would be likely to produce change in them all.

A more apt contrast with the Nāyar cult would be that of the Nambūdiri Brahmans, who live in contact with the Nāyars and from whom the Nāyars have derived many elements of their religion. Unfortunately, the religious orthodoxy of the Nambūdiris prevented me from studying them intimately. The information which I have from Nambūdiri informants and from literature[16] indicates however that their ancestral cult is similar to that of the Tamil Brahmans. Its role structure is different, for in the Nambūdiri patrilineal household only the eldest son may have Nambūdiri descendants. Younger sons may have Nāyar children, but these are totally excluded from the performance of rites for their dead fathers. Headship of the Nambūdiri family, like that of the Iravа, passes from the eldest son down the line of brothers and then drops to the eldest son of the junior generation. There is both a collective cult of dead patrilineal heads and also separate anniversary rites for individual dead. Both types of ritual take the Sanskritic form. If the deceased was a younger son, his eldest brother's sons perform these rites. Nambūdiris hold the same beliefs about the fate of the soul as do Tamil Brahmans and, like them, deny that the spirits of ancestors are punitive. The informal intimacy of behavior between men of senior and junior generations in the Nambūdiri household is also very similar to that among Tamil Brahmans, and contrasts with the formal etiquette of partial avoidance between Nāyar matrilineal kinsmen. It is somewhat extraordinary and interesting to note that the Nambūdiri Brahmans and the Nāyars, through centuries of close proximity and hypergamous marital unions, have retained totally different legal and emotional relationships within their respective unilineal units, with correspondingly different beliefs connected with their ancestral cults.

Although the Nāyars' relationships with ghosts are similar in important respects to those with living elders, they are significantly different in others. The ghosts' powers are not limited by the demands of reality, and they can magically protect and punish in fantastic ways in which human elders cannot. As Fortes points out for the Tallensi ancestors, the ghosts appear "as a standardized and highly elaborated picture of the parents as they might appear to a young child in real life—mystically omnipotent, capricious, vindictive, and yet beneficent."[17] It is while a child is comparatively helpless that his elders appear in this form. As he grows up and gains competence, the elders shrink to human proportions. But in some areas of living a Nāyar was traditionally helpless throughout life—with regard to flood and drought, many sicknesses, and

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Nayar

was still undivided commented to me on this change. "In my *taravād*," he said, "I dare not speak before the *kāranavan* without standing and placing my hand before my mouth. But in K. *taravād*, after their partition, I have seen the nephews sitting to play cards with their uncle and passing the cigarette from their mouth to his. When I saw this I knew that relationship means property, and without property there is no relationship."

Moreover, the change to elementary family households does not merely entail a shift of the same disciplinary functions from the mother's brother to the father. Nāyar fathers have a tradition of indulgent tenderness toward their children and are loth to discipline them. Even when they are forced to do so, the techniques of discipline differ from those in a traditional *taravād* house. In the intimate atmosphere of the small elementary family household, traditional etiquette is abandoned. Children learn to obey both parents from love more than from fear. There appears to be a much deeper repression of aggression than in the traditional setting, and correspondingly, many young Nāyars cannot entertain the notion that their parents' ghosts could act punitively toward them. It seems probable that such changes in the modes of handling aggression—affected also by the collapse of the military tradition and the modern legal ban on all forms of physical aggression—may also lie behind the repugnance of modern Nāyars for such other traditional religious forms as blood sacrifice and spirit possession.

Also important in the abandonment of ghost cults is, however, an increased tendency toward the adoption of Sanskrit rites. This tendency, which has marked all the non-Brahman castes during the past hundred years or so, I would associate with increasing mobility within the caste system and, most recently, with its gradual collapse. For the Nāyars, as for the lower castes, the Brahmans are no longer a group with whom they have fixed status relationships. Instead, the Brahmans are now a reference group whom the Nāyars emulate and with whom they compete in the struggle for high rank and respectability. Some Nāyars who still hold their traditional beliefs in ancestral spirits and deities deliberately "purge" their rites of non-Sanskritic elements in order to gain respectability. Others have changed both rites and beliefs toward a modified form of the Brahmanical religion, even while they are busy repudiating the religious authority of the Brahman. Yet others, whose number is probably increasing, repudiate both Brahmanical and non-Sanskritic religions in their orthodox forms. Instead, they work out for themselves a more or less agnostic world view with humanitarian ideals, in which ceremonies, if they figure at all, figure only as acts of piety toward respected persons.

The cults of alien ghosts are also changing their form and gradually dying out. This change accompanies the gradual collapse of the caste system as a system of ranked occupational groups linked by hereditary service ties. The collapse of the caste system itself results from the growth of the capitalist market economy and the democratization of political institutions. Some Nāyars retain their beliefs in witchcraft and sorcery, but the categories of persons whom they suspect are no longer solely caste determined. They are as likely to include fellow factory workers or competitors in government service, irrespective of caste. Professional exorcists of appropriate caste are often no longer available, for many have left their traditional work. So also have many of the low caste families who formerly propitiated ghosts and minor deities associated with village temples or with Nāyar *taravāds*. Since the passing of the Temple Entry

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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Nayar

unsuitability to the time in which they exist, which is apparent amongst those societies more liable to change.

But whatever the reasons may be, the relations between the sexes in Malabar are unusually happy. They seem to be more than commonly natural. The most obvious reason for their being so is that they are less influenced by considerations of property than elsewhere. The desire to maintain property within the family is the curse of all natural relations between the sexes. What strange customs has it not put upon mankind! We have some strange examples of these in Southern India, as when a woman is married to the door-post of the house, and the house owner begets children on her to inherit his property; or when a man marries his child to a woman, and himself begets children on her, and the individual who stands in the position of father may be but a few years older than the son. But we need not look farther than Europe for anomalous customs which inhibit the working of the law of natural selection. Malabar is fairly free from unfortunate customs, and it is perfectly fair to say the marital relation amongst the Nâyars is more than commonly natural.

A description of the ceremonies and formalities connected with the marital connexion will now be attempted. The first of these, described as "most peculiar, distinctive, and unique," is the Tâli-kettu-kalyânam. The details of this ceremony vary in different parts of Malabar, but the ceremony itself, in some form, is essential, and must be performed for every Nâyar girl before she attains puberty. Tâli-kettu-kalyânam means marriage by tying the tâli, or ceremony of tying the tâli, a small golden ornament, worn on the neck, the ordinary badge of marriage amongst the Dravidian peoples.

The following account was given by M.R.Ry. K. R. Krishna Menon, retired Sub-Judge, to the Commission:—

"The Tâli-kettu-kalyânam is somewhat analogous to what a Dévadâsi (dancing girl attached to pagodas) of other countries undergoes before she begins her profession. Among royal families, and those of certain Edaprabhûs, a Kshatriya,—and among the Chárna sect, a Nedungádi,—is invited to the girl's house at an auspicious hour appointed for the purpose, and in the presence of friends and castemen ties tâli round her neck, and goes away after receiving a certain fee for his trouble. Among the other sects, the horoscope of the girl is examined

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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Nayar

765 of boundaries. With the observance of the Pinda Atiyantaram or feast of pindams, there is involved the Dîkṣha, or leaving the entire body unshaved for 41 days, or for a year. There is no variable limit between 41 days [184] or a year. Forty-one days is permissible as the period for the Dîkṣha, but a year is correct. The 41-day period is the rule in North Malabar.

[593] I have seen many who were under the Dîkṣha for a year. He who lets his hair grow may be a son or nephew [604] of the deceased. One member only of the Taravâd bears [30] the mark of mourning by his growth of hair, remarkable enough in Malabar where every one as a rule, excepting the Mâppila Muhammadans (and they shave their heads), shaves his face, head (except the patch on the crown) chest and arms, or at any rate his wrists. He who is under the Dîkṣha offers half-boiled rice and gingelly seeds to the spirit of the deceased every morning after [784] his bath; and he is under restriction from women, from alchoholic drinks, and from chewing betel, also tobacco. When the Dîkṣha is observed, the ashes of the dead are not deposited as described already (in the sun-dried vessel) until its last day—the forty-first or a year after death. When it is carried on for a year there is observed every month a ceremony called * Bali. It is noteworthy [82] that, in this monthly ceremony and for the conclusion of the Dîkṣha, it is not the thirtieth or three hundred and [80] sixty-fifth day which marks the date for the ceremonies, but it is the day (of the month) of the star which was presiding when the deceased met his death: the returning day on which the star presides.

793 For the * Bali, a man of the Elâyatu caste officiates. 564 It has been said already ("Nambûtiri Brâhmans": 765 Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I), that the Elâyatus are priests for the Nâyars. They wear the Brâhman's thread, but they are not Brâhmans. They are not permitted to study the Vêdas, but to the Nâyars they stand in the place of the ordinary Purôhit. The officiating Elâyatu prepares the rice for the Vêli when the deceased, represented by Karuka grass, is offered boiled rice, curds, gingelly seeds and some other things. The Elâyatu should be paid a rupee for his services, which are considered necessary even when the man under Dîkṣha himself is familiar with the required ceremonial.

765 The last day of the Dîkṣha is one of festivity. After 603 the * Bali the man under Dîkṣha is shaved. All this over

* Or Bâli.

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Rangachari (1909, V, p. 320), reports that in Travancore, the 'leading villager' gave his consent and received gifts from the bridegroom 'as if to recompense him'. This recalls the statement of one informant of Pālakkara, who said he had heard a rumour that in ancient days, the Aśān of the village had the right to deflower retainer-Nayar women, a right which he might forgo on payment of a sum of money.[1]

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The *tāli* is, as Thurston & Rangachari observe, shaped like a leaf of the *Ficus religiosa* (pipal) tree (*aswatha*). This tree is worshipped by Nayars, Nambūdiris, and Tamil Brahmans as an embodiment of the Sanskrit god Vishnu. It is said to symbolize male creative power, the female tree with which it is associated being the *veppu* or margosa (*Melia Azadirachta*).[2] In the Tamil country, the two trees are frequently planted together in a mock-marriage ceremony, so that the creeping stems of the margosa may twine round the pipal tree like the arms of a faithful wife round her husband. Among Nayars, Tiyyars, Nambūdiris, and Tamil Brahmans, barren women are counselled to march a hundred and eight times round the ficus tree to obtain children. We are therefore probably justified in regarding the *tāli* as a phallic symbol, presented to the bride as a sign 'that she may now do what she pleases'.[3]

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Innes (1908, p. 174) and Krishna Menon (1894) reports that, traditionally, the bridegroom's party approached the house flourishing weapons and shouting a war-cry. Later, before tying the *tāli*, the bridegroom laid his sword across his lap, and the girl took an arrow and a mirror in her hand. Mateer (1883) says that in Travancore, if the family were too poor to perform the ceremonies, the girl's mother might tie her *tāli* before a sword or a clay idol representing Kāma Devan, the Hindu god of passion.[4] Similarly, since the traditional ceremony died out, many Pālakkara mothers take their immature daughters to some Brahmanical temple dedicated to Vishnu (the god of marital and domestic prosperity) and themselves tie the *tāli* before the god.

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Fawcett (1901, pp. 229–32) observes that the girl's brother carried her into the marriage hall from the house, bore her three times round it, and seated her to the left of the bridegroom; Innes (1908, p. 174) remarks that she might be carried there either by her brother or her *karanavan*. On the fourth day, after their bath, the couple returned to the girl's ancestral house to find its doors shut against them. The bridegroom must force open the doors before he could take his seat with his bride in the kitchen where they ate a meal together. Alternatively, he might enter the house last in the procession, when boys of the girl's lineage pelted him with plantain fruits, which he must ward off with his shield.

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According to Innes (*ibid.* p. 173), before the rite the girl was secluded for three days and nights in an inner room of the house, with a brass hand-mirror in her right hand, an arrow in her left, and the eight auspicious objects before her. On the second morning she went to the bathing pool, on the bank of which she must, after bathing, jump thrice over a brass vessel of water with an unhusked coconut on top, overturning both at the third time.

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I turn to the rite in the royal lineages. In the Cochin lineage, which prides itself on ancient, 'true' Kshattriya descent, the rite took the form of a Brahmanical marriage ceremony with Sanskrit *mantras* from the Grihya Sutras. It was performed separately for each girl before puberty by a Nambūdiri, who must actually deflower the girl on the night of the ceremonies. The bridegroom received a fee and departed after four days. The girl might then cohabit

[1] Dr Aiyappan (1932) similarly reports that the Aśān in some areas deflowered Nayar women at a ceremonial initiation.

[2] For a discussion of the symbolic significance of this tree see Dubois (1906, p. 652).

[3] My interpretation of the *tāli* as a phallic symbol is the more likely in that among Tamil Smartha Brahmans of Tanjore, the marriage *tāli* bears engraved upon it a *lingam*, the phallic emblem of Śiva.

[4] This modern rite recalls the ceremonial marriage of the Devadasis (temple-dancers and prostitutes) in the Tamil country, in which the dedicated girl's *tāli* is tied by the temple priest before the god of the temple, or, if a girl fails to become dedicated to a god before puberty, by her mother in the presence of a sword. The 'marriage' is followed after puberty by the nuptials, at which a wealthy high caste man of the neighbourhood passes the night with the girl as the first of her lovers.

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AWll Kerala AWll
Tiyyar
[North Malabar)

588 coconut in half, returned amid music, and entered the middle room. The barber woman dressed her and threw rice on her head.

[604] The girl's mother's brother's wife then carried a plank of the milk tree into the marriage [782] shed, walked round with it three times, and placed it on a mat over rice and paddy. The Tandan of the local group must be present to witness the rites. The mother's brother's wife and other women, or in some areas the *Kāranavan*, led out the girl who, with her face hidden by a cloth, walked three times round and sat on the plank. The barber man instructed her to perform an offering of rice and water to the household lamp and the post supporting the south-east corner of the shed, which had previously been set up by the carpenter with ceremonies at an auspicious time. The girl threw more rice to the cardinal points, the earth, and the sky. Gold and silver coins, salt, rice, paddy, turmeric, charcoal, and pieces of old cadjan leaf from the house-thatch were then tied separately in leaves and placed in a mud pot. The mouth of [787] the pot was covered with a leaf and tied with string. The girl sprinkled rice over the pot, broke a hole in the lid, and picked out one of the articles, which was examined as an augur of her destiny and of the number of children she would bear. She then twisted off a coconut from a bunch hanging at the corner of the shed. Each of her relatives threw a new cloth over her head. Half of the cloths were given to the barber, who at this point uncovered the girl's face and head and poured coconut water from a leaf of the pipal tree on to a silver and a copper coin which he had placed upon her head. Her *Kāranavan* asked the astrologer if the auspicious time had arrived, after which the barber woman handed the *tāli* to the mother's brother's wife who tied it round the girl's neck. The barber woman poured water on the girl's hands: this she threw upwards three times and once each to the cardinal points. A lit cotton wick, steeped in oil, was twisted round a rod of bamboo stuck in a young coconut. The girl was required to look at the sun and at this wick. She then walked three times round a coconut tree in the garden, pouring water at its root. This concluded the ceremonies. Unfortunately, I have no record of whether the girl was further secluded after the rites were over.

[604] Anantha Krishna Iyer (1909–12, I, p. 288) reports that the *tāli* was tied 'either by the [582] maternal or paternal aunt or by the would-be mother-in-law, if the husband for her has already been selected'. All of these kinswomen (mother's brother's wife, father's sister and husband's mother) are real or potential mothers-in-law because of cross-cousin marriage. My own informants and also Aiyappan state that the rite included an initiation into cookery: the girl was made to grind condiments on a grindstone and to pretend to cook milk porridge before the *tāli* was tied. Aiyappan reports that the barber woman instructed her, and at the end said: 'Prepare sweet porridge, give it to father and mother, and to me, and keep what remains in the *uri*' (a rope support to keep vessels suspended).

This initiation rite, while, like the Nayar one, symbolizing the girl's attainment of maturity and her passage to the status of a married woman, is adapted to the occupation and kinship of Tiyyars. It is significant that to attain 'wifehood' a Tiyyar girl must grind condiments and make porridge – a foreshadowing of her domestic duties as wife.

588 The mother's brother's wife and the father's sister are preferred mothers-in-law for a
582 Tiyyar girl. The fact that either could be replaced by the actual prospective mother-in-law if the girl were already betrothed proves that they acted in the rite as potential mothers-in-law. The mother's brother's wife is of course suited to become a girl's mother-in-law in a matrilineal system which recognizes strong paternal claims (see Fortes 1953, p. 200). Marriage of her son to her husband's niece mitigates the proverbial conflict between cross-cousins, while
98 cementing the relationship between father and son who frequently live together and co-
605 operate in cultivation. The father's sister's claim is equally strong. In this marriage the boy
[593] commonly returns to his mother's brother in his natal house, the girl remaining in her paternal house where she has been brought up. The matrilineal cross-cousin marriage of a man is

presence of *enangar*. The young children of a divorced woman might return with her to her brother's house, but had the right to go back before puberty to their fathers' house. 586

In this system the husbands obtain both sexual and procreative rights in their wife, her children becoming members of their patrilineal group. The wife herself does not, however, as among Brahmans, become wholly incorporated as a member of her husband's lineage. A sonless widow whose husband left no brothers had no rights to property or maintenance by his family; she must return to her brother's house. She could not, as among Brahmans, adopt on behalf of her husband or temporarily manage his property in the absence of adult kinsmen. Though her children belong to the husband's group, the wife appears as in North Malabar to be only temporarily 'leased' by the husbands, on payments of the *kānam* sum, for her sexual and domestic services. 595 613 851 [589] [581]

Moreover, though a woman cannot inherit property in her natal *taravāḍ*, the bond between brother and sister remains strong. The eldest brother is early regarded as the guardian of his sisters, who observe partial avoidance and respect to him much as in a Nayar *taravāḍ*. It is significant that at divorce, a woman is returned to her brother, not to her father or the headman of her patrilineal group. At the death of a married woman, her brothers and their children observe pollution in their own dwelling-group, assembling at the deceased's conjugal house on the sixteenth day for final rites to the spirit. At the death of a man, his sisters' sons have pollution, assemble at his house, and in the sixteen days of mourning perform offerings to the spirit immediately after the deceased's sons, and before his younger brothers and paternal grandchildren. At the death of a man, his sisters and daughters make offerings to an image of the deceased on the fourteenth day, but the widow herself (unlike the Brahman widow) takes no part in death rites. This shows the strong tie persisting between a married woman and her natal group, and the comparative lack of integration into the group of the women who marry its men. The former existence of exogamous matrilineal clans underlines this persistence of the bond between women and their natal kinsfolk, especially their brothers.[1] 593 613 428 586 593 765 [782] 593

The Tiyyar Tāli-*Rite*. A girl's *tāli* was tied before puberty by a boy, usually a small child, of some local *taravāḍ*, affinal or unrelated, into which the girl might marry. My informants in Cochin and Walluvanād could not remember the details of the rite, which has died out in the last twenty years. They knew that it must be done before puberty, and that the *tāli*-tier sometimes married the girl after puberty by the usual ceremonies. 588

According to Thurston & Rangachari (1909, VII, pp. 80–1), who describe the rite in Chavakkad, between Calicut and Cochin, Anantha Krishna Iyer (1909–12, I, pp. 285–7) who describes it for Cochin, and Aiyappan (1944, pp. 159–60) for the whole central area, the horoscopes were compared as for a marriage. The artisans provided an arrow and a brass mirror which the girl carried in her hand, a plank of the milk-tree, the rouge-bottle which figures in the eight auspicious objects, and a staff carried by the bridegroom. The local *Pānan* (a low caste of sorcerers and menial workers) brought a peacock-feather umbrella for the girl and a 'war umbrella' for the boy. A week in advance, the carpenter planted the south-east corner-post of the shed at an auspicious moment. For three days before the rites, the girl was secluded as if she had menstruated. On the day before the rites, she was taken to worship the sun, and was seated in the marriage-hall on a plank with a lit lamp, a vessel of water, rice, plantain-fruits, and a coconut before her. Her mother's brother's wife parted her hair and placed a gold coin on her crown, and the Tandan's wife (like the barber in North Malabar) anointed this three times with oil, here poured from a leaf of the *jak* tree. The girl took a ceremonial bath and was secluded in the house with a casket, a bell-metal mirror, and a sword on a stool beside her. [787] [564] [587]

[1] The tie between sisters is also close. They and their children observe pollution for each others' deaths, and the sororate (forbidden among Nayars and North Malabar Tiyyars) sometimes confirms the status of the mother's sister as a proxy mother.

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar
Tiyyar

This partial avoidance between a woman and her older natal kinsmen begins after the *tāli*-rite, when she receives the title *amma* (lit. 'mother'). In the rite, it seems, the girl is fictitiously made mature by the mock menstrual seclusion – before she is in danger of actually becoming mature; her sexuality is then given away by her natal kinsmen to a vicarious husband outside her lineage. For this is the one right in her forbidden to her natal kinsmen; the rest – her domestic services and procreative power – remain theirs throughout her life. Even among North Malabar Nayars and Tiyyars, with their virilocal residence, the brother may call home his sister and her children and require her to divorce her husband. He must, moreover, maintain her if she is divorced, and her children have the right to return to the mother's brother's house as his heirs.

The unconscious desire for adelphic incest in these matrilineal castes appears in other rites. I have mentioned the rites performed by the brother of a girl at her first menstruation among South Malabar Nayars and North Malabar Tiyyars. Later, when the South Malabar Nayar woman was in the fifth or seventh month of her pregnancy, she was formerly seated before her brother who poured tamarind juice into her mouth from the point of the *taravāḍ*'s ancestral sword. It was believed that he thus conveyed strength (*sakthi*, a generalized form of energy believed to reside *par excellence* in semen) and also martial valour, into the body of the first-born child. This seems a clear instance of the brother's unconscious wish to impregnate his sister himself, as well as an explicit recognition that, in matriliny, the mother's brother has the rights of a *pater* in the child.

Among South Malabar Tiyyars the tamarind-juice is given by the pregnant woman's brother to her husband, and by the husband's sister to his wife. This rite is more in keeping with a patrilineal system in which the husband has primary procreative rights in his wife. At the same time, it seems likely that the rite reflects the brother's unconscious desire to pass his 'strength' to his sister and her child, through the husband, and the sister's desire to contribute to the making of the child, and thus usurp the role of her brother's wife. The rite is beautifully in keeping with double unilineal descent, in which brothers and sisters retain strong interest and rights in each others' offspring.

The unconscious fear, and underlying it, an unconscious desire, of women for sexual attack from a male parental figure (the father in this case) probably appears also in the South Malabar Tiyyar rites which precede the tamarind-drinking. These are to drive out evil spirits who may attack the child in the womb. The woman sits at night before a group of washermen (Mannans) who invoke the spirit in song, and perform devil-dancing in weird masks. By morning, the more susceptible of the women present, overcome by the spirit, may go into fits. Finally a live cock is held against the woman's forehead, and rice thrown over her head. If she has a fit, the cock is beheaded and its blood offered to the evil spirit. The rites are paid for by the woman's father. In view of what is known of the beliefs concerning incubi in western societies (Jones 1931, ch. 3), it seems probable that these rites issue from the unconscious female fear of being attacked sexually by the father, and the recognition of the father's unconscious desire to kill the child in his daughter's womb. The Mannan devil-dancers (who sometimes consciously impersonate the dead ancestors of a propitiating Tiyyar lineage) may be interpreted to represent the woman's lineage forbears and thus, collectively, her father.[1]

Again, in all the groups studied the *taravāḍ* is believed to be guarded by a group of snake-

[1] This interpretation is practically certain in view of the almost identical ceremony carried out one year after the death of a South Malabar Tiyyar. It is believed that before this the spirit is earth-bound and cannot be invoked to pass to heaven. On the night fixed, small girls of the *taravāḍ* sit before Mannan and Panan devil-dancers who, as in the pregnancy ceremonies, wear weird masks and sing to invoke the spirit. Late at night one of the girls may become possessed by it and talk like the deceased, and give commands to the family about its future conduct. After this ceremony the spirit is freed from its bonds to the earth (see Thurston and Rangachari 1909, VII, p. 91). Since the possession of the girls by an ancestral spirit here is of the same kind as in the pregnancy rites and both types of spirit are called *pradhan*, there seems little doubt that the evil spirit who attacks is also ancestral and thus an *imar*.

613 Again in all the groups studied the

276 *tarawād* is believed to be guarded by a group of snake-
564 gods (*nāgas*) who reside in the small grove in the south-east corner of the ancestral gardens.
182 If they are offended, the snakes inflict the *tarawād* with barrenness among women, disease, and
184 child-deaths. They are propitiated by the low caste of Pulluvar. A Pulluvar and his wife
782 come to the Nayar or Tiyyar grove and draw figures of the serpents in green, red, yellow, and
787 black. They sing songs of entreaty to the snakes, and play on a musical instrument, while one or more women of the propitiating *tarawād*, who have observed sexual continence and food taboos for several days previously, dance round the figures with hair streaming. The snakes then 'enter the bodies' of these women, who behave in a dissociated manner and speak with the voice of the possessing snake-spirit, announcing to *tarawād* members the kind of propitiation necessary to overcome their wrath. Since they are the guardians of the *tarawād*, are jealous of the marital sexuality of women born into it, can inflict them with barrenness, and periodically 'enter into' them, it seems likely that these totemic snakes are unconsciously regarded as phallic symbols of the *tarawād*'s male forbears (whether matrilineal or patrilineal). Their 'possession' of the women would thus reflect the incestuous desires of women towards men of the parental generation in the *tarawād*, and secondarily towards their brothers.

593 I have discussed in general terms the probable existence of unconscious incestuous
182 desires between the individual and members of the parental generation and, as an extension of this, between siblings. We must now face the problem of whether, in the matrilineal castes, a regular Oedipus complex exists: that is, of whether a man unconsciously wishes to kill his father and appropriate his mother, and whether a girl harbours murderous wishes towards her mother and incestuous ones towards her father.[1]

There seems little doubt that in the matrilineal as in the patrilineal castes, a 'normal' Oedipus complex must develop in early infancy. Even among South Malabar Nayars the physiological function of the male in procreation is clearly acknowledged, and a child is expected to resemble its father as well as its matrilineal kin. The Nayar infant must, moreover, be aware of the marital relationship between its parents, since it commonly sleeps in the
593 mother's room until the age of about four or until the next sibling is born. At about the age of
604 five to six, however, a change takes place in the relationship between a South Malabar Nayar
182 child and its parental generation, and thus, we may suppose, in its unconscious attitudes to these figures. A boy now comes under the discipline of his mother's brothers, and a relationship of reverence with underlying hostility begins to be formed. A girl becomes aware that her mother's brothers are her ultimate guardians and, though she may still approach them freely, she must submit to them. The father drops into the background. In a traditional household, whereas he might play with them freely as babies, he may not now interfere in the upbringing of his children. Even today, he may be already divorced and replaced by another husband: in Palakkara sixteen out of seventy Nayar sibling groups containing children under
[578] the age of fifteen had no contact with the *genitor* or his kin. The mother's brother thus takes over a great part of the role of *pater*. The relationship admits, however, greater conscious hostility than does the patrilineal father-child relationship. Despite the reverence demanded in public, Nayar men sometimes remark privately that they harbour murderous feeling towards their *Āchanaran*: several have in fact killed him. Such conscious hostility to the father would be almost unheard of in a high patrilineal caste. The partial avoidance required between a man and his sister's son, and the extreme formality of their behaviour, reflect this underlying hostility. The relationship with the elder brother is, in etiquette, modelled on that

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[1] My data, as far as Malabar matriliny is concerned, contradict Malinowski's (1916) theory that the Oedipus complex is absent from the start in matrilineal societies and is replaced by the wish to marry the sister and kill the maternal uncle. They confirm Ernest Jones's (1924) conclusion that a normal Oedipus complex exists in matrilineal as in patrilineal societies, but that in matriliny repressed incestuous desire for the mother is extended to an unusual degree to the sister, and much unconscious hostility to the father deflected towards the mother's brother. Roheim's (1950, ch. 3) refutation of Malinowski's view and his analysis of the Oedipus complex of Normanby Island are also relevant.

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar
Tiyyar

with the mother's brother; emotionally, hostility is more repressed and greater loyalty demanded. Both avuncular and fraternal relationships pivot on the bond of men to their mothers and sisters: common devotion to these women places the men in a position of equivalence rather than of unity, emphasizes loyalty to the *tarawād* rather than interpersonal amity, and points up the rivalry between them.

The suppressed hostility of a boy towards his father with reference to the mother becomes, therefore, among South Malabar Nayars transferred to the mother's brother at the age of four to six. The completeness of this transference appears in death rites. The younger brother or sister's son of a dead man performs his funeral rites, observes pollution for fifteen days, and, if he is the immediate heir, mourning and sexual abstinence for six months to one year. He thenceforth annually offers cooked food to the spirit, which is represented in the form of a terrible and vengeful animal (*predham*, the same word as for the hairy spirits who attack menstruous women). No mourning, pollution, or propitiations were traditionally observed for the *genitor*, about whose spirit no beliefs are held. The observance of pollution (without rites) for the mother's *tāli*-tier was the sole acknowledgment of its fathers' roles in the *tarawād*'s perpetuation. The son's unconscious desires remain primarily fixed upon his mother, as appears in his paramount devotion to her in social life and to Bhagavadi in religion. They appear to be secondarily directed to the younger sister and sister's daughter, hence the avoidance and extreme formality demanded in the relationship with them. The rites of first menstruation and pregnancy and the institution of the serpent-gods seem to indicate that unconsciously the mother's brothers and other matrilineal forbears are regarded as *genitores* as well as *patres* and the elder brother as the symbolic spouse of a woman as well as her natural guardian.

Among North Malabar Nayars and Tiyyars, with their virilocal residence, the transference of hostile wishes on the part of the male, and incestuous wishes on the part of the female, from the father to the mother's brother, is less completely carried out. The father is often known throughout his life, when he shares with the mother's brother the role of *pater*. Since legal rights are concentrated with him, the relationship to the mother's brother tends to be more hostile, that to the father, more affectionate. But individual circumstances modify these relationships: a man may align himself alternately with mother's brother and with father according to the financial support each offers him. Death-pollution is observed for both and the vengeful spirits of both are propitiated. As in South Malabar, the primary emotional relationship is always with the mother and the secondary one with the sister, to whose claims those of the wife are subordinated. The etiquette of avoidance and restraint towards the sister and sisters' daughters is identical in north and south. A girl regards her father with greater reverence as her natural guardian, but her behaviour is more stereotyped than among South Malabar Nayars and corresponds more closely with that to the mother's brother. Father-daughter incest is regarded with greater horror than in the south, from which we may surmise that unconscious incestuous desires remain stronger.

On the surface, the South Malabar Tiyyar system with its double unilineal descent and emphasis on the unity of the patrilineal extended family forms a contrast to these matrilineal systems. The father or rather, traditionally, the eldest of the fraternal group of fathers, is head of the family. Sons are brought up under the discipline of all their fathers whom they are expected to regard with equal deference and love. A more regular Oedipus complex appears to develop in this caste. From the age of five to six, a boy must observe reverence to his fathers comparable to that of a Nayar boy to his mother's brothers. He addresses them with deference, and avoids them out of respect. Like a Nayar boy, he is dismissed from intimate contact with the mother about this age, as also with the sisters: they in turn, as he grows older, treat him with deference. The unconscious hostility of the son to his fathers appears in beliefs about

184 68 The unconscious
182 hostility of the son to his fathers appears in beliefs about
E. KATHLEEN GOUGH

593 the spirits of dead *kāraṇavan* of the patrilineal group, which, like Nayar *kāraṇavan*' spirits,
are predatory and dangerous beasts to be propitiated with fear. Hostility to the father is
however in his lifetime more deeply suppressed than to the Nayar mother's brother, as is
775 male sibling rivalry. Among Nayars, an attempt is made to mitigate the divergent interests
595 of married brothers by reducing to a minimum the claims of their wives and children. Their
mutual jealousy is also acknowledged in the prohibition against brothers having sex-relation
with the same woman. Among Tiyyars unity of marital interests is ensured by obliging brothers
to share a wife. This enforced unity of brothers is the most striking feature of the Tiyyar
system and that which contrasts most strongly with the matrilineal castes.

182 Also among Tiyyars the father-daughter relationship resembles that of the Nayar to his
184 sister's daughter. After she is five to six, a girl's father sternly disciplines her; with the onset
593 of puberty an etiquette of partial avoidance is imposed. The 'possession' of women by serpent-
gods of their natal *tarawād*, and the exorcism of demons during pregnancy lead me to suspect
that unconscious incestuous wishes towards the father are perpetuated in women as they are
towards the mother's brothers (whose images are the serpent gods of the matrilineage) among
Nayars and matrilineal Tiyyars.

593 The Tiyyar system is not, however, a 'regular' patrilineal one. We may suspect this from
the existence of matrilineal clans. First, the father's power is not absolute: he shares it with
182 his brothers. Second, the harmony between brothers is, as among Nayars, maintained primarily
through their dependence on the mother. Among Nayars men neglect their wives and children
613 for the sake of *tarawād* and mother. Among Tiyyars they forgo sexual satisfaction for the sake
184 of the mother and domestic harmony: the mother controls the wife's actions and dictates
the turns by which her sons may sleep with their common wife. This dependence on the
606 mother is reflected, as among Nayars, in devotion to Bhagavadi.

Third, the Tiyyar system resembles the Nayar in the strength of brother-sister ties.
593 The Tiyyar father early surrenders part of the guardianship of his daughters to his sons.
182 This appears at the *tāli*-rite where the father hands his daughter to the mock bridegroom,
who returns her at the 'divorce' to her brother. The relationship between a mature but un-
184 married girl and her brother is, as among Nayars, one of discipline, restraint and partial
avoidance. After her marriage and departure to the husband's house, the restraint between
a Tiyyar woman and her brother is somewhat relaxed. Should she be divorced or widowed,
however, she is returned to her brother.

The disciplinary role of the brother is reflected in the relationship to the mother's brother.
He is not, as in many patrilineal systems, an intimate with whom joking and licence are per-
mitted. He is rather a potential father-substitute, and may in fact become one if his sister
is divorced or widowed. At his death his sisters' children observe pollution as for a patrilineal
kinsmen and, after the deceased's sons but before his younger brothers, make offerings to the
spirit. In life his claim as a potential father-in-law resembles that of the Nayar or Tiyyar
mother's brother in North Malabar.

595 Fraternal polyandry strengthens the claims of maternal kin, as it does the ties between
182 a woman and her natal family. For in the traditional family, with a single common wife, there
is only one set of maternal kinsfolk for all the children of brothers. Even if a second wife were
593 taken, sororal polygyny or the sororate might perpetuate this situation. Again, it is clear
that with fraternal polyandry many Tiyyar women must have remained unmarried and under
the permanent guardianship of their brothers. The uncertain prospect of marriage for a
woman gives us a further clue to the meaning of the *tāli*-rite.

588 Having clarified the relationship of women to their natal kinsmen, we can state more
593 clearly the probable unconscious motives for the *tāli*-rite. In all the groups her natal kins-
182 men retained strong though varying rights in a woman throughout her life. In all, the bond

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AWII Kerala AWII
Nayar
Tiyyar

between mother and son was the most cherished relationship, while that between brother and sister came second in emotional strength. In all the exogamy of the unilineal group was sternly enjoined, and there was horror of adelphic incest. There was, however, evidently temptation towards it, since women remained under the partial guardianship of their brothers and might (invariably among South Malabar Nayars, occasionally in the other groups) live in the same house with them.

It is a commonplace in Hinduism that a woman is never independent: throughout her life she is under the guardianship of one or more men. At her birth all rights in a woman are vested in the men of her property-group, among Nayars and Tiyyars the *kāraṇavan* and under him other males of the group, whether matrilineal or patrilineal. These rights include the right to discipline her and, as she becomes old enough, to command her domestic services; they are counterbalanced by the obligation to feed her and protect her from harm. At puberty two new sets of rights are acquired by whoever is her guardian, in her sexuality and in the children she may bear. In the matrilineal castes the *ius in genitricem* is retained by the matrilineal kinsmen. Among South Malabar Tiyyars it is given to a group of brothers of another patrilineal lineage at the post-puberty marriage rite. In all these castes there is, however, uncertainty about the *ius in uxorem*, since the girl is not, as in a patrilineal Tamil caste, given over to the guardianship of one particular husband for the duration of her life. First, all the castes permit divorce and reversion to the brothers' house. Second, among Nayars, though a woman might have several husbands traditionally, she might conceivably have none, if she was divorced or failed to compete with other women. Among South Malabar Tiyyars, because of fraternal polyandry, many women must have remained unmarried. The *tāli*-rite, therefore, appears in one aspect as half a marriage, a ceremony made necessary by the strong incest-taboos in these groups and the uncertain nature of post-puberty marriage. In it the men of her natal group ceremonially give away the sexual rights in a girl. That the bridegroom does not receive permanent rights in his bride, but forsakes her on the fourth morning, points up the negative character of this marriage, as a renunciation of rights by the men of one group without the corresponding acceptance of them by members of another.

In all the groups certain ritual acts emphasize this reluctant renunciation by the woman's natal kinsmen. In the matrilineal castes one of her brothers, or her *kāraṇavan*, carries each girl into the marriage shed, bears her round, and seats her on the plank. This act is significant because after the *tāli*-rite a girl may not be touched by mature men of her lineage: taboos associated with incest prohibitions come into force from this date. Among South Malabar Tiyyars, again, the mother's brother, who after the father has secondary rights of guardianship and who, through matrilineal clan exogamy, is also concerned in the etiquette of incest-taboos, carries the girl to her seat. In the matrilineal castes, the girl's *kāraṇavan* asks the astrologer if the auspicious time has come, and signals for the *tāli* to be tied. Among South Malabar Tiyyars, as might be expected, the father officiates here. Among South Malabar Nayars, brothers of the girls first welcome the bridegrooms, wash their feet, and receive gifts of clothing in return. The underlying sexual hostility of the lineage's men to these necessary intruders appears on the fourth morning, when boys of the host lineage pelt the bridegrooms with plantain-fruits (recognized as phallic symbols by Nayars) as they enter the house to eat the ceremonial meal with their brides. Among Nayars and South Malabar Tiyyars, the *kāraṇavan*'s gifts to the bridegrooms when they depart after the 'divorce' signify his gratitude for their act of ceremonially releasing the procreative powers of his lineage's women, while at the same time dismissing them.

We note now that the *tāli* is seldom tied by the man with whom the girl will later cohabit as her husband. Among South Malabar Nayars the *enāṉan* might, after the 'divorce', approach her again as lover. But his status as ritual bridegroom gave him no prior claims: as the girl's

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar
Tiyyar

796 831 78 language women whom they meet. At the temple they are received by young Nayar girls who sell to them a mixture of yellow turmeric powder, blessed by *mantras*, and receive in return a volley of sexual abuse. Thousands of cocks are sacrificed in the temple yard by the pilgrims as an offering to Bhagavadi who is believed to drink their blood. Hundreds of Nayar, Tiyyar, and Mannan Bhagavadi oracles from all over Malabar prance wildly in the temple courtyard in their red cloths and waist-bands of bells, madly chopping their foreheads till blood flows copiously. In the evening, at a sign from the *addsari* of Kodungalur, the chief of the Mukkuvans (a low fishing caste of the same culture as Tiyyars) begins the work of polluting the actual shrine by rushing up to it and beating the outer wall with his stick. According to Fawcett (1901 p. 245), he formally entered the shrine and defecated on the idol. The crowd of Nayar and low caste men then hurtle, shouting foul abuse, round the shrine, beat on its walls, and fling gold and filth into its interior. The festival ends at dusk when they return quietly home. The next day, the Bharani day itself, the temple is locked and deserted in fear, since it is believed that for seven days following, the foul demon attendants of the goddess are given over to depredations of the shrine and of the idol itself. On the seventh day, its priests reopen the temple, ritually purify it, and restore it to normal high caste worship again.[1]

796 831 78 182 This attack on the goddess by low caste men who may not normally approach her represents, it seems likely, a sexual attack on the mother by son-figures to whom she is normally denied. In it the high caste priests (fathers) vacate the temple; the rules of purity and pollution are reversed; animal sacrifice is indulged in; women and the goddess are insulted in a manner contrary to everyday etiquette; and the Bhagavadi idol formally made the object of an anal attack. The ceremony appears to act out cathartically the incestuous phantasies of Nayar and low caste men towards their mother, and incidentally, in their obscene attack on the Nayar girls, the repressed desires of low caste men towards forbidden women of the higher castes. I suggest that in the singing of obscene songs by the washermen at a Nayar or Tiyyar puberty ceremony, and the use of the barber as a kind of proxy bridegroom at the North Malabar Tiyyar *tāli*-rite, these low caste men act out similar phantasies towards higher-caste mother-figures, as well as providing the higher castes with harmless 'polluted' bridegrooms who perform the necessary but dangerous tasks associated with bringing their girls to womanhood.

564 588 881 182 831 182 831 613 564 423 593 Why should the Oedipal fear in these castes be so excessively strong that it is necessary ceremonially to renounce the rights in the sexuality of a natal kinswoman before her puberty, yet at the same time dangerous to be the first to receive these rights? I suggest that this is so because of the great power accorded to elders in these castes, made possible by the joint ownership of property by the lineage-segment under the legal headship of its senior man. These property-arrangements perpetuate, often until middle age, male economic and emotional dependence on the parental generation, and enforce the attitudes of reverence and masochistic submission to elders which so characterize the higher Hindu castes. This dependence on the parental generation causes male incestuous wishes to remain primarily fixed on the mother, and secondarily on other close natal kinswomen throughout life, and perpetuates the corresponding unconscious fear of male parental vengeance. It is, therefore, in male phantasy, both necessary to give away the sexual rights in natal kinswomen (who are identified with the mother as desirable but forbidden sexual objects) before they are in danger of becoming mature, yet at the same time dangerous to deflower the virgins of other lineages who, being still 'owned' by their own natal kinsmen, are also unconsciously likened

To the mother.

[1] I saw this festival in 1949. For fuller accounts see Thurston & Rangachari, (1909, V, pp. 400-05) and K. P. Padmanabha Menon (1933, IV, pp. 333-43).

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWII Kerala AWII Nayar

When the family becomes unwieldy, or certain members show insubordination, the family property is partitioned equally among *each female line*. That is to say, if there are three sisters in the family, each having daughters and granddaughters, the partition is done in such a way that each of the ancestresses founds a separate family among whom the original property is equally divided. It is best explained by a diagram :—

[Capital letters stand for women.]

In this case, supposing A, B and C dead, and the eldest male member *d*, being *Karnavan*, the male members, *t*, *k* and others demand partition. The joint property will be divided equally into three parts, each of the groups, in spite of their numerical difference, getting equal shares. Now, in the first group, there are two subdivisions to be made, while, in the third group, the property has to be further divided into three. Group 2 has only one female line, and, therefore, in that line, the property remains intact.

The partition of property does not affect the relationship. The members of a divided family are still called by the classificatory names, and a birth or death in one family creates pollution to the whole stock. Centuries might pass, but they would still remain strictly exogamous groups, and the rights of relationship (such as pollution, etc.) would continue, though in a lesser degree. There are many instances in which, though family partition took place at least a hundred and fifty years ago, the members continue to call each other brothers and sisters, as if they were the nearest blood relations.

It may be noticed in this connection that a Nāyar young man or woman is not supposed to talk to any relations of the opposite sex in the same family *if they are of almost the same age*. A younger brother can talk to a sister considerably older than himself ; but under no conditions may he talk to a younger one, and in orthodox families this restriction is carried so far that if it is known that a brother is standing somewhere near, the sister scrupulously avoids him. It is the custom that after the *Talikettu kalyanam* the brother (own and collateral alike) is not supposed to see, talk to, or be in the same room with his sister. This involves considerable inconvenience, for, if the mother is dead and there is no one of *her generation* living, a man loses all touch with the family, because his sisters and women of that generation may not speak to him, and he may not go near them. In such cases, it is customary

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWII Kerala AWII Nayar

for young men to go and stay in their wives' houses and visit their own families for business arrangements.

Authority in the family is wielded by the eldest member, who is called *kārnavan*. He has full control of the common property, and manages the income very much as he pleases. He arranges marriages (*sambandhams*) for the boys as well as the girls of the family. He had till lately full power (at least in practice) of alienating anything that belonged to them. His will was undisputed law. This is, perhaps, what is intended to be conveyed by the term *Matri-potestas* in communities of female descent. But it should be remembered that among the Nāyars the autocrat of the family is not the mother, but the mother's brother.

The power of the *Kārnavan* over the family property has always been, in theory, limited, because the property was supposed to belong to every member of the family jointly. Till lately, however, it was practically impossible to limit the *Kārnavan's* power of mortgaging or even fully alienating it, because when it came to litigation the *Kārnavan* always pleaded that such action as he took was necessary for the welfare of the family, and justified himself by basing his arguments "on the discretionary power" vested in him. However, the old theory has lately been asserted in law that a *Kārnavan* can sell or mortgage the property only with the consent of the other members of the family.

All the moneys owing to the family can be paid only through him. He alone can give permission for the use of what belongs to the family. He can punish all the members of the family, either by depriving them temporarily of their allowance, or by prohibiting them to enter the house. In short, he is virtually the head of a tribe rather than the senior member of a family.

The Wife of the Kārnavan.—The wife of the *Kārnavan* has no standing in the family; yet as is but natural, she is supposed to be a dark and sinister force working against the interests of the *Tharawad*. Since she does not belong to the *Tharawad* of her husband she has no interest in its well-being, and it is generally supposed that the *Ammāvi* (the wife of the maternal uncle) is interested only in getting as much out of her husband's family for her own children as her influence over her husband allows. All the tales told to children have as the villain the *Ammāvi*, whose position is not only that of the wife of the maternal uncle, but also the mother-in-law of the brother. She is universally considered to be a sort of sinister step-mother.

But it must be acknowledged that the Nāyar *Kārnavan* loves his sister's children more than his own. The explanation of this apparently unnatural feeling lies in two directions. First, the father is not necessarily of the same caste as the son. Secondly, there is always the possibility of a break in the union. Divorce is not a matter of any difficulty among the Nāyars, both the husband and wife having equal right to announce such a termination of their connection whenever either of the parties desires to do so. This instability of relationship is the principal reason

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWII Kerala AWII Nayar

why a man's affection for his own son is neither so intense nor so permanent as his affection for his sister's son.

Also, in matrilineal communities family tradition descends only through the sister's progeny. As the Nāyars formed a fighting aristocracy before the British conquest, they had naturally acquired family tradition, mottoes and arms, which descend of right only in the female line. Hence also a man looks to the training of his sister's sons to keep up his family tradition. All these contribute to an extraordinary, and at first sight inexplicable, tenderness towards the children of one's sister.

Relationship.[1]—Among the Nāyars the classificatory system of relationship is prevalent. When the ties of the family extend not only to one's immediate relations but to all who trace descent from the same ancestress in the female line, it is but natural that the terms of close relationship are used to all who belong to the family. As a matter of fact, the distinction between own brothers and collateral brothers does not exist. All the persons of your own generation older than you are called brothers, and equal respect is shown to them. They are called by such terms as big brother, small brother, etc., *only when they are older than you.* Those who are younger are always called by their names.

All women of your mother's generation are called mothers; those older than your mother are called *Peramma* or *Valiamma*, which means nominal mother or bigger mother, and those younger are called *Kochamma*, little mothers. But unlike among brothers, the distinction between one's mother and other females of the same generation is always maintained. Though respect is paid to all of them alike, own mother is always spoken of as mother, without qualification, and she alone has complete right to command you. Mother's own sisters are also different from those who are only collateral cousins to her. Mother's own brother and all of his generation are called *Ammavan* (literally mother's brother). Here also the distinction between own *Ammavas* and collateral *ammavas* was very slight in Nāyar society till nearly thirty years ago. Now, however, one looks more on one's own *Ammava* as different from others, which is obviously due to the influence of the authority of direct relationship inculcated through the new system of education.[2]

The mother-in-law has no special name. This is, of course, due to the universal prevalence of first cross-cousin marriage. The mother-in-law is generally addressed

[1] Spencer and Gillen (*Native Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 56) try to prove that the classificatory terminology to express relationship shows the existence in some earlier time of group marriages. Perhaps it does so when such relationship terms are in use in a patrilineal community. On the other hand, in a matrilineal community such terms have nothing to do with the system of marriage, but only with relationship counted on the mother's side.

[2] Note specially: though all the women of the mother's generation stand in equal relationship, it is only the actual parent that is entitled to be called mother without any qualification to it. All the others are spoken of in comparative terms, as big mother, i.e., elder mother, small mother, i.e., younger mother.

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWII Kerala AWII Nayar

the last fifty years. All the evidence that we have of this custom among the Nāyars in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, are from foreign travellers who, it must be remembered, were not allowed to come within sixty yards of a Nāyar house. Their evidence, therefore, is an extremely unsatisfactory ground for dogmatising on Nāyar customs. On the other hand, the extensive Malayalam literature of that period contains no single allusion to polyandry. The works of Kunchan Nambiar, whom it is no exaggeration whatever to compare to Molière, though he describes minutely the social life of the Nāyars of the early eighteenth century with its laxity of morals, redeemed only by chivalry of conduct, makes no mention whatever of polyandry. On the other hand, in a famous passage he makes the declaration: "It is against the laws of all castes for a woman to have four or five husbands."

Nalanchu barthaaoru thikku thanatu
Nalu jatikkum Viddhichatallorkanam.

How far this statement is decisive it is difficult to say. But one thing seems to be clear from it, that the idea in itself was repugnant to the community as a whole, though individuals might have practised it here and there.[1]

V.—Birth and Funeral Ceremonies.

Among the Nāyars, as among all the people whose life is regulated by magico-religious customs, child-birth is an event of great and mysterious significance. Especially is this the case with regard to the first child. Therefore the ceremonies of nativity are of an intenser and more magical character during the time of the first pregnancy than during subsequent ones. Indeed, the mysterious nature of childbearing is entirely lost after the first time, and the ceremonies on subsequent occasions are only a few tabus, which are generally, in the phraseology of Van Genepp, "rites dynamistes directs et negatives."

The most important of the pre-natal ceremonies is *Pulicudi*,[2] or the drinking of the tamarind juice; and the customs relating it are as follows: On the appointed day all the *enangars* (people belonging to the same kingship organization) come to the house early in the morning, and the pregnant woman is taken out by one of them and bathed, after rubbing oil all over her. Then she is dressed for the occasion and, entering the house from the north, sits looking eastward. The astrologer, who being of a lower caste commonly stands in the outer courtyard, calculates the auspicious hour. He sends word when the time is come, and the *Ammāci* (the wife of the mother's brother, and mother-in-law by right of the brother) pours a few drops of tamarind juice in a small silver bowl. The brother or the uncle of the

[1] See Note 3, Appendix.

[2] Dr. Rivers makes some obviously erroneous deductions based upon this word, for which see note on "The Similarities between Nāyars and the Todas," Appendix, Note 2.

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll Nayar

pregnant woman, taking a sword, generally kept for this purpose, and holding it in the left hand points it to her mouth. The juice is then poured on it in such a way as to fall by drops into her open mouth. After this, one of the women of the *enangu* group smears the body and head of the pregnant woman with coco-nut oil and takes her to the tank. She is also required to choose one from a collection of different grains, and it is believed you can say from the choice what the sex of the child is going to be.

The significance of the ceremony seems to be twofold. First, it is the official notification to the allied families as well as to the local village groups of the fact that a woman is lawfully pregnant in the house. The intervention of the *Ammāri* or the mother's brother's wife is supposed to show that everything is as it ought to be. It is, therefore, in the first place merely a social announcement. Secondly, the actual ceremony with the sword is supposed to have the effect of making the child a warrior, and it is believed to impart the virtues of bravery, manliness and honest dealing. It is, therefore, in the classification of Van Genepp, a rite direct, sympathetic, automatic and positive. The tamarind juice is believed to create sensitiveness and honour. It is a "contagionist" rite. Whenever a man shows cowardice, the question that is asked as a mark of contempt is: "Were you not born after *Pulicudi?*" or "did not your mother drink the tamarand juice?"

After the *Pulicudi* there are many prohibitions which a pregnant woman has to respect. Of this the most important is the absolute sexual tabu which dates from the *Pulicudi* to forty days after the childbirth. Other tabus are mainly connected with food and are mostly "contagionist" positively or negatively. Thus the woman is not supposed to take very warm food, as it might scorch the head of the child; she is not supposed to eat much hot food (chilis, pepper, etc.), because it might put out the eyes of the child. There are no definite rules about these, but every mother in her desire to do the child no possible harm keeps herself away from all doubtful matter.

After the birth of the child there is a mild pollution (as compared to the strong untouchable pollution caused by death) in the family. This pollution does not carry any disabilities except the prohibition to enter any sacred precincts. On the fifteenth day there is a purificatory ceremony, but there are no festivities or celebrations connected with it.

The mother and the child are accommodated in a special room which no man may enter. Unmarried girls, unless they are little children, are also not allowed to go near. The child, of course, can be seen by all after the cutting and burying of the umbilical cord. It is handed round to the father and other interested relations. No kind of food except the mother's milk is given to it, and, if the mother died at the birth of the child, it is generally given the milk of some relations or even of outsiders who have children of almost the same age. The person whose milk the child thus drinks, though she be an outsider, is considered equal to its own mother, and her children are considered the same as own brothers. There is a story of a Nāyar

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

177 582 585 intentions to register *sambandhams* was thirty-six in 1896—97, twenty-four in 1897—98 and only fourteen in 1898—99." He accounts for the falling off as follows:—

> The mass of the people continues to regard the marriage law with aversion and suspicion, and even the educated members of the community who are in favour of the measure, shrink from taking advantage of it from fear of offending the elderly members of their *tarawadds*, and all the powerful Nambuthiris and other great landlords. The Registrar of Calicut also points out, that the power conferred by the marriage law, to make provision for one's own wife and children, has hitherto acted as some inducement to persons to register their *sambandhams*, but as Act V of 1898 (Madras) which came into force from 2nd September 1898, enables the followers of the *marumakkathâyam* law to attain this object without registering their *sambandhams*, and "unnecessarily curtailing their liberty of action, and risking the chances of divorce proceedings," he thinks it unlikely that registration under the marriage law would increase in future.

595 Among the Nayars of ancient times in Cochin, Malabar and Travancore, there was polyandry. In the report of the Malabar Marriage Commission, it is said, that there is evidence to show that it still lingers in Ponnani and Walluvanad Taluks, especially on the Cochin border of the former Taluk.[1] Apart from its existence in former times, it may be said that nowhere in these States is the custom still found to linger, no admitted instance of it has come to my notice in the course of my investigations into the customs and manners of the castes in the various parts of the State. An account of these customs as it existed in ancient times, and the theories that have been advanced in respect of it are of some ethnographical importance, and it may not be out of place here.

Polyandry.

593 604 582 584 The Nayars of ancient times were, in most cases, neither regularly married, nor did they care much, when married, to support their wives and children; but their nephews (sons of sisters), who were their legitimate heirs, were properly looked after. Nayar women generally mated with Brahmans or Nayars, but never with people of lower caste under pain of death.

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 83.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

are allowed greater freedom in the choice as well as in the divorce of husbands (*sambandhakárans*), and the females in the family do not interfere in their freedom so long as it does not produce any domestic scandal. The orthodox view is that, as the woman is not independent, she seldom thinks of relinquishing the husband. Arbitrary divorce is thus discouraged, and adultery is a grave social offence. A wife, who is disputatious, who steals her husband's property, who favours another than her husband, who converses with strangers, who is gluttonous, who enters strange houses, should be put away even though she may have born ten sons. Litigation between two families and disagreement between a husband and wife are also the causes. Social stigma follows the adulterer, and the adulteress loses her status in society.

A Nayar woman has to observe certain ceremonies during her first pregnancy. First during and after the seventh month of pregnancy, she bathes and worships the deity in the temple every morning, and eats before her morning meal, a small quantity of butter, over which holy *mantrams* have been recited by the temple priest or by Nambuthiris. This is done generally till delivery. *Pulikudi* (tamarind juice drinking) is an indispensable ceremony performed for every pregnant woman, by the rich and poor alike, on an auspicious day, in the ninth month of pregnancy. An auspicious day, nay, even the very hour, is fixed by the astrologer. The ceremony opens by the planting of a twig of the *ambázha* tree (Spondias mangifera) on the morning of the day of the ceremony in the inner court-yard (*nadumittam*) or the northern wing of the house. At the appointed hour (*muhúrtam*), the pregnant woman, after having been bathed and properly attired, is conducted to the northern block of the house (*vatikkini*) where she is seated facing eastwards. The *Ammáyi* or the uncle's wife, whose presence on the occasion is essential, goes to the court-yard, and plucking a few leaves of the planted twig, squeezes a few drops of its juice into a cup. This she hands over to the brother, or uncle, if any, of the pregnant woman. It is necessary that the brother should wear a gold ring on his right hand ring-finger. Holding a country knife (*pisánkatti*) in his left hand, with its point towards the north, he pours the tamarind juice over his knife with his right hand three times

Pulikudi.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

Sivagothrakúr (worshippers or followers of Siva), would seem to indicate that they reverence Siva more than Vishnu.

A Nayar tarawad or marumakkathayam family.

"No people" says Elie Reclus, "have more fully appreciated the maternal family, nor developed it more logically than the Nayars, despite the accumulated obstacles thrown in its way by a race admirably intelligent and moreover victorious."[1] The *tarawád* or *marumakkathayam* family consists in theory of all persons who can trace their descent in the female line from a single ancestress. In its simplest form it is one which consists of mother and her children, living together with their maternal uncle, that is the mother's brother, as *káranavan* or the senior male member of the family. In its complex form it consists of a mother and all her children, both male and female, all her grand children by her daughters, all her brothers and sisters and the descendants on the sisters' side,—in short, all the relatives of the woman on the female side, however distant their relationship, living together in the same block of buildings, dining together in the same hall and enjoying all the property in common. No descendant through the male line can be a member of such a family. There are at present instances of families containing a hundred or more members who live in one or more buildings situated in a large compound and who are the descendants of one woman separated perhaps by generations of descent, and yet able to trace their common descent from one ancestress.

In such a family the woman senior to others in age was originally mistress or head of the family, and she reigned or governed. Her eldest daughter was prime minister in the family, and through her all orders were transmitted to her little world. The son recognised the priority of the mother before whom he did not even venture to seat himself, unless she had given him permission. The brother obeyed the elder sister, and respected the younger ones. In fact, the affection between brother and sister was a feeling that endured, while conjugal love was but a passing sentiment. The wives of brothers and sons held but a secondary position in the family. The Nayars loved their families more than anything else in the world, and made it the end of their existence. Like all Hindus they held reprehensible the man who

1. Primitive folk, page 159.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

764
[804] is performed. All the members of the family take part in this ceremony under the direction of the priest who belongs to the [793] *Athikurussi* class. The ceremony consists in filling up three [564] *para* measures with paddy and one *edangali* of raw rice, and placing them near the corpse together with a burning lamp of local manufacture.

[351] A mango tree is cut, and as much fuel as is necessary for the burning of the dead is collected and placed at the south-eastern corner of the compound which is always set apart for the burning or burial of the dead. A small pit about the size of the dead body is dug. Across this are placed three long stumps of the plantain tree, one at each end and one in the middle, and on these the foundation of the pyre is laid. The dead body which is placed on a bamboo bier is carried to the cremation ground and placed on the pyre with its head to the south, then fuel is laid over it, together with a little camphor, sandal-wood and ghee, if the family can afford the expense. Be- 613 764 fore the body is placed on the pyre, the *anandaravan*, the member of the family immediately junior to the deceased, tears from the new cloths laid on the corpse, a piece sufficient to go round his own loins. He wears it round his waist and holds in his hand or tucks into his cloth at the waist, a piece of iron, generally a long key. It must be noted here, that all those members of the family who are older than the deceased may not take any part whatsoever in the funeral ceremony or in any subsequent ceremony after the cremation or burial, but all adult males junior to the deceased should be present when the [593] pyre is lighted. The deceased's younger brother, or in his absence, his nephew (sister's son), sets fire to the pyre [604] beginning at the head of the corpse; but if a son is left by the deceased, he sets fire to the pyre beginning at the feet. In the case of a woman, the son has to set fire to the pyre, or in his absence, one junior in age to her has the right to do so. It is a matter of great importance that the whole pyre should burn at once, and great care towards that end is taken. While the corpse is being consumed, all the members of the family go and bathe in a tank (there is always one in the compound of a Nayar house). The eldest man who has the piece of cloth and the key carries a pot of water, and all return to the place of cremation. When the body is almost consumed by fire, the senior member carries the pot of water thrice round it, letting

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

On the third day after the death, all those who are related to the *tarawâd* by matrimonial alliances combine and give a feast to the inmates of the house and to the neighbours. This is called the *Patni kanji*. On the seventh day a return feast is given by the members of the *tarawâd*, to all relations and neighbours. Between the seventh and the fourteenth day after death, no ceremonies are performed, but the members of the family are under pollution, and then on the fourteenth day comes the *Sanchayanam*. It is the disposal of the calcined remains, the ashes of the deceased. The male members of the *tarawad* go to the place of cremation, and picking up the unburnt bones of the deceased, place them in an earthern pot which is sun-dried—not burnt in the usual way—and cover up the mouth of the pot with a piece of cloth. The eldest carries it and, followed by the rest, proceeds to the nearest river (it must be a running stream) into which it is thrown. In some places the bones are collected on the seventh and preserved in a pot which, when convenient, is carried to Benares, Rameswaram, Gaya, or to Thirunelly in Wynad and there deposited as above described. Such a disposal is called *Ashtagaya-Sradham*, and puts an end to the need of all earthly ceremonies—nor is there any need to continue the annual ceremony for that person. The belief is that the collection and careful disposal of the ashes of the dead gives peace to the departed spirit, which will not thereafter injure the living members of the *tarawâd*.

On the fifteenth day is the purificatory ceremony at which a man of the *Attikurissi* clan officiates as priest. In the morning the members of the family wear cloths washed by a *Vêlan* (washerman) and assemble together for purification by the Nayar priest who throws on them, both before and after bathing, paddy, rice, gingelly seeds, and the holy mixture (milk, oil, etc.). The Elayad or the Brahman priest performs the *Punyâham* or purification of the house, well, etc., and on the sixteenth day he takes the place of the priest. On the evening of the fifteenth day and the morning of the sixteenth, the priests and the villagers are sumptuously fed, and presents of cloth are made to the latter and money to the former. In the Chittur Taluk, the priestly functions are sometimes performed by the Elayad, and *Deeksha* (leaving the body unshaved for forty-one days or a year) is observed by the nephew and the son of the deceased. The one who is under this mark of mourning makes offerings of rice balls

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

[p. 17]

The Nayar Family in a Disintegrating Matrilineal System[1]

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Introduction

IN this short essay, I will present one case of the disintegration of a Nayar *tarwad* (matrilineal joint family), based on the materials collected by myself.

The general institutional system of a traditional Nayar *tarwad* is already well known, and has been much discussed recently by anthropologists, including K. Gough.[2] Here I state it briefly as a preface to the main discussion. A traditional Nayar *tarwad* was a property group consisting of a matrilineal lineage exclusively, headed and represented by the senior male member, called *karanavan*. Normally the members of a *tarwad* formed a distinguishable domestic unit. Spouses of the members of a *tarwad* resided in the *tarwad* where they were born, and a husband visited his wife at her *tarwad* at night and returned early morning.[3] The father had no duty or obligation on his own children, instead, the *karanavan* was the legal guardian of the offspring of the female members of the *tarwad*.

The Nayars are one of the Hindu upper castes in Kerala, next to the Nambudri Brahman, and traditionally the majority of the Nayars had been land holders or managers, not cultivators. On such a social and economic base, the function of the *tarwad* had been maintained. Various factors have led to the disintegration of the *tarwad* system, the major cause of which, I think, was the economic changes accompanied by modernization since the beginning of the

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1 This essay is one of the outcomes of my field work on matrilineal systems in India (1955–56) carried out by the generous grant of the Elin Wagner Foundation in Sweden, to which my profound acknowledgement goes. Also I am very thankful for the help of Dr. John Mogey.

2 E. Kathleen Gough: "Changing kinship usages in the setting of political and economic change among the Nayars of Malabar," *J. R. Anthrop. Inst.* 82, pp. 71–87; "A comparison of incest prohibitions and the rules of exogamy in three matrilineal groups of the Marabal," *International Achives of Ethnography*, Vol. XLVI, Part I, 1952, pp. 82–105.

3 The *karanavan* was an exception: he could take his wife and children in his *tarwad*. In North Malabar, not only the *karanavan*, but also other male members used to take their wives and children to their *tarwad*. However, these wives, including children, had to leave their husband's *tarwad*, as soon as their husband died.

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

[Marayil Tarwad]

613 193 The story goes back to the early 19th century. Prabaty Amma who came to visit a temple in Ernaklum, met a young Nayar man. Soon after they were fallen in love, and married. The name of this young man was Narayana Panikkar, who was a district officer in Palgat, and later became the *karanavan* of his *tarwad*. By the right of the *karanavan*, he took his wife to his *tarwad*.

613 193 591 968 Thirty years after their marriage, Narayana Panikkar died. According to the law of the Nayar, his wife and children had to leave from his *tarwad* at the moment of his death. Prabaty Amma accompanied with her children left his *tarwad*, but she did not return to her natal *tarwad*, Mullasseri. Instead, she decided to reside in the house which had been built by her husband for her as a gift. She named this *tarwad* Marayil, thus she and her children became independent from Mullasseri *tarwad*. It was said in this time, her mother's *tarwad*, Mullasseri, was so full with her matrilineal kin, hence she preferred to reside in this new house with her sons and daughters. This house is at present occupied by E. group. At the establishment of this new *tarwad*, I think, she must have had some land, or managing rights in farming land, given by her natal *tarwad* or by her husband as a gift, but I failed to discover the economic basis on which this *tarwad* life had been carried on.

613 175 Thus established, the new *tarwad* grew bigger in the course of time. In 1898, the increase of its members led to the first residential partition into two groups, as already stated. It was twenty years after the marriage of the granddaughter of Prabaty Amma, *12* and her daughter *29* who was born in 1888, was ten years old, and *39* is said to have been born in this *tarwad* around this year. From these data, it can be assumed that all members from *1* to *39* of Marayil *tarwad* lived in this *tarwad* building together. The situation of the members of this old *tarwad* before the partition in 1898 is as follows.

613 591 593 182 175 Married members of this *tarwad* mostly practiced "visiting marriage" (see Diagram, the majority of male members were visiting husbands). Seventeen out of twenty-three cases of marriages in the second and the third generations, took a visiting form. Five cases who did not practice "visiging marriage" were younger ones of the third generation, whose ages are almost equal to those of the older members of the fourth generation. In the fourth generation, the cases of the visiting marriages decreased to four out of nineteen cases. These facts reveal that the residential pattern became more neolocal than duolocal during the fourth generation: by this time many had already established independent households in which they lived with their wife and children, having an independent income. These members are shown by ▲ in the Diagram.

A more careful examination of this Diagram, reveals that this tendency had already started in the third generation, as appeared in the case of the husband of *12*, Nando Pillai. He had used to visit his wife for twenty years after his marriage. He was a brilliant and successful man who had an important post in the palace of the Cochin Maharaja, which allowed him to accumulate considerable wealth. He made a new *tarwad* building for his sisters as their *karanavan*, and again in 1898 he built a new beautiful *tarwad* with a big garden, where he himself lived with his wife and children, thus making his wife independent from her *tarwad*. This house is at present occupied by the C group.

613 591 175 182 Then Marayil *tarwad* already suffering from over population, stimulated by this event, split into two groups: one was the *tawari* of eldest daughter of Prabaty Amma, another was that of the second and third daughters. The latter

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

[Marayil Tarwad]

613 The increase in the establishment of paternal elementary families gradually
425 split the *tarwad* into pieces, lessening the function of the *tarwad*. This Marayil
175 *tarwad* finally divided its property between individual members in 1944, as did
182 many *tarwad* in this period. This was forty-seven years since the first partition in 1898, and this period saw the disintegration of this *tarwad*.

613 The members of the fourth and fifth generations in the Diagram make up
175 the transitional period: they had the *karanavan* as the head of the *tarwad* and at
182 the same time they played a role of the husband/father as in a patrilineal family. Their duties and obligations were transitional from those of the *karanavan* to
[593] those of the father. Though by law then the *karanavan* was the legal guardian of
[429] the members of a *tarwad*, actually the father who lived with his children was already *de facto* guardian of his children. These individuals were pulled in their obligations and duties between their matrilineal kin and their wives and children. In fact they differentiated their roles according to the economic and residential circumstances in which they were involved, though the degree of differentiation differed from individual to individual.

613 When the fifth generation were in their youth, the *karanavan* of the *tarwad*
593 was *15*. According to the Nayar rule the duty of the fostering and educating these members should be performed by *15*. However, in actuality among these
175 members, those who had been given a higher education by the *karanavan* were
182 sons of *13* and *14* (*31*, *32*, *33*, *36* and *39*), while that of the sons of *12* (*25*, *27*, *28* and *30*) was given by their father. The latter's case is indeed the result of the father's economic ability and his affection towards his children whom he lived with. Yet this father, on the other hand, made also a considerable economic contribution to the members of his own *tarwad* as the *karanavan*. Thus such a man played the two roles of father and *karanavan* at the same time.

613 Such behaviour and contributions created ambivalent psychological
602 inclinations among his descendants through his wife as well as through his sisters. For example, the descendants of *12* who live now partly on property left by
421 *12*'s husband, tend to complain that their grandfather's sisters' daughters who
175 live in the house built by *12*'s husband, are enjoying property left by their
182 grandfather. They said that "they are enjoying our grandfather's property," a situation reasonable from the point of view of the working of the matrilineal system, since "our grandfather" is "their maternal uncle." Here we see an interesting fact that they think in terms of the father (grandfather): "the father (grandfather) is of ours." At the same time, they have a tendency to expect and depend on the economic help from *32* and *27*, who are their matrilineal kin. In fact *57* after the death of her father, was economically helped by *32* and (27), which she took for granted. Among these members at the transitional stage, a confusion of rights and obligations is obvious.

613 In such an unstable situation involving ambivalent elements, what gave
582 them a certain satisfaction or solution was cross-cousin marriage. The marriage of *53*, whose wife is his classificatory cross-cousin brought satisfaction to both
175 matrilineal groups (Marayil and Kallamparanbal), because by this marriage
182 both parties would have a chance to enjoy, and exercise rights on, the property

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

left by *12*'s husband for the kingroups of both his wife and his sisters, since both inclined to demand rights on the property left by him to the other party. The marriage of *56* also involved a similar situation for both members of Marayil and Mangayil in order to enjoy the economic activity of *32*.

Traditionally the Nayar tended to marry among particular *tarwad* (not necessarily two), between which friendly relationships, expressed in terms of *enanger*, had been established. Hence many marriages fall into the category of the cross-cousin marriage. However, the above cited cases were obviously meant to solve the ambivalent economic situation arising from the disintegrating stage of the *tarwad* system; and so it was explained to me. The present younger generation strongly avoid cross-cousin marriage, as they think it is not good biologically. However, whether they dislike it or not, after the disintegration of the *tarwad* system the cross-cousin marriage itself is losing its social and economic function.

Matrilineal Elements in the Present Nayar Family

In spite of the final partition of the *tarwad* property, and the establishment of elementary family households which made the *tarwad* functionless, the ideology of the *tarwad* (matrilineal system) still persists in various aspects of the life of the present Nayar.

In the new system, in theory, the husband established an independent house for himself and his wife, freed from both his *tarwad* and her *tarwad*, but it is interesting to observe that the house built by the husband is found near to his wife's *tarwad*, unless his job forced him to leave their birth place. The picture is that of a set of households whose wives are sisters, grouped in a certain area. For instance the husbands of *55* and *66* built their houses very near to that of the C group, which was built by the father of *29*: these three households are very close to each other, across narrow lanes and a garden. The behaviour of these members was described on page 21.

This might give an impression that women tend to attach to their matrilineal members more than men do. However, men also have very close attachments to their sisters, and are always ready to give moral and economic help to them, in spite of living at a greater distance from them. It was the traditional custom to marry a member of a *tarwad* situated in the same local area, since this was certainly convenient for visiting marriage, and also owing to the inter *tarwad* political relationships. Hence husbands and their sisters easily can visit each other, even after residential separation. Such frequent visits among the members of the matrilineal group maintain great familiarity among them. So far as my own observation goes, a man who has considerable income helps his poorer sisters almost in a same way as he does his wife and children. They themselves say they have often trouble about which they should care for more, wife or sister. They told me, that today they were well aware that they should do their best for their wife and children with whom they live, but they also could not help loving and caring for their sisters and sisters' children very much.

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

This psychological pull towards matrilineal kin also applies to the wives. When they decide an important matter they always ask their maternal uncle's advice, as well as that of their husband. Even the younger generation have great affection for, and a tendency to depend on, the mother's brothers almost in the same way they do their father. Particularly, if the father dies, it is the mother's brother who actually takes the responsibility. (See the case of *57*.

I think the function of matrilineal elements found in these relations is largely supported by the fact that matrilineal members reside near each other, where they can meet almost every day. Indeed the factors which are vital to the destruction of matrilineal coherence are created by those members who established their life with their wife and children in places geographically distant from the land of the Nayar, Kerala, such as New Delhi, Bombay or Calcutta, for example the members of F, K and L in Diagram. In earlier phases of a marriage, a man who has to reside very far away because of his job, usually leaves his wife in her mother's house (as the cases of *91*, *44* and *50*), but when his job becomes permanent and he has children, usually he takes his wife and children to his new place. In the course of time, these members tend to have less and less contact with their matrilineal kin at home, which naturally leads to social and economic distance from the latter.

Thus the dispersion of members in terms of geographical distance affects to the actual function of the matrilineal group. In fact I found that the style of talking about the members of F, K and L sounds considerably different from that used for the members who reside in the same locality. If geographical distance is within Kerala, it is a quite different matter from the case of outside Kerala: for example, a member of a matrilineal group in Ernaklum, resides at Trivandrum. In such a case, wife certainly comes back to her mother's house for child birth, and the members come together at important ceremonial occasions of the matrilineal group. Within Kerala, the land of Nayar, such activities are taken for granted in the society.

A great geographical dispersion of the members results in the decrease of the functional members of the matrilineal group centred on the *tarwad*, but on the other hand, this local matrilineal group would increase its size by peripheral members of non-matrilineal descendants: children of the matrilineal male members including their wives. These children stand very close to their father's matrilinineal kin, with whom their father keeps frequent contact. The children feel the matrilineal kin of their father equally important to that of the mother. When all matrilineal members lived in a *tarwad*, the children were aware of the *tarwad* members of their non-resident-father, recognizing them as an important affinal group *(tarwad)*. But I think the degree of familiarity towards these members greatly differs from that towards the matrilineal kin of the father with whom they live. Today the actual importance of the father who is the authority in the household, brings *his* matrilineal kin much closer to his children.

It is very interesting, I found, that in all households, the fathers of which were the members of Marayil *tarwad*, an enlarged picture of Prabaty Amma, the foundress of the *tarwad*, was placed at the centre of the guest room. Their

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

children regard this picture of Prabaty Amma as that of their ancestress through their father. It appears from this symbol, combined with the frequent visits of their father's sisters and their children, that the father's matrilineal kin are conceptualized as if they were that of the mother. This tendency is greater in the case of the wife and children of *32*, which I think largely derives from the fact that *32* is playing the role of the central figure of the Pula Sambantham of his matrilineal group, and that his wife is a member of Mangayil *tarwad*, which is one of the important and close affinal matrilineal groups to Marayil members: the mother's brother and brother of *32*'s wife also married with members of Marayil *26* and *56*.

In spite of the inclination of these children towards their father's matrilineal group, and paternal authority being well established, they still maintain the surname of the male members of their mother's matrilineal group.[1] In Trivandrum the Nayar said to me it depended on the individual free choice whether one should take the father's surname or the mother's brother's: in fact, I found some of them taking their father's surname. However, among the Nayar in Ernaklum, all they are taking mother's brothers' surname and they are proud to do so.

The greater approach of the children to their father's matrilineal group seems to me largely due to their father's important status in his matrilineal group, the members of which live very near to him, combined with his distinguished economic activities, which make him maintain closer contact with his matrilineal kin. For example, if *32* was not the central figure in his matrilineal group, and poor, and on the other hand his wife had a very wealthy uncle to help her now and then, his wife and children might have more attachment to their mother's matrilineal kin, rather than to the father's.

In such a transitional stage, including the earlier stage of the disintegration of the *tarwad* as already discussed, a man has two orientations, to his matrilineal group and to his elementary family. And a man stands balanced between the two groups, differentiating his role according to the circumstances in which he is involved. In this situation to decide a man's behaviour the given law seems less effective than the actual situation in which an individual is involved. *36* who married and once resided in his wife's *tarwad*, later returned to his own *tarwad*, taking the role of a *karanavan* of his old *tarwad*. He said that he felt his need as a guardian for his sister's children, as there was no grown up male member in this *tarwad* building; but he did not mind leaving his wife and grown-up daughters and sons behind. This case should be compared with the case of Nando Pillai who lived his later life with his wife and children, though he was the legal guardian *(karanavan)* of his *tarwad*.

1 Among Nayars, traditionally the surname is used for only male members of a *tarwad*, while female members are called by her maiden name, adding the term "Amma" instead of the surname, after their initiation ceremony. All male members of a *tarwad* share the same surname: for example, the surname of Marayil members is Menon. However, since the same surname is used by many *tarwad* among the Nayars, it does not necessarily indicate common descent lines.

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

In a recent account of a Nāyar wedding in high life in Travancore, the host is said to have distributed flowers, attar, etc., to all his Hindu guests, while the European, Eurasian, and other Christian guests, partook of cake and wine, and other refreshments, in a separate tent. The Chief Secretary to Government proposed the toast of the bride and bridegroom.

The following note on Nāyar pregnancy ceremonies was supplied to Mr. Fawcett by Mr. U. Balakrishnan Nāyar. "A woman has to observe certain ceremonies during pregnancy. First, during and after the seventh month, she (at least among the well-to-do classes) bathes, and worships in the temple every morning, and eats before her morning meal a small quantity of butter, over which mantrams (consecrated formulæ) have been said by the temple priest, or by Nambūtiris. This is generally done till delivery. Another, and even more important ceremony, is the puli-kuti (drinking tamarind juice). This is an indispensable ceremony, performed by rich and poor alike, on a particular day in the ninth month. The day and hour are fixed by the local astrologer. The ceremony begins with the planting of a twig of the ampasham tree on the morning of the day of the ceremony in the principal courtyard (natu-muttam) of the taravād. At the appointed hour or muhūrtam, the pregnant woman, after having bathed, and properly attired, is conducted to a particular portion of the house (vatakini or northern wing), where she is seated, facing eastward. The ammayi, or uncle's wife, whose presence on the occasion is necessary, goes to the courtyard, and, plucking a few leaves of the planted twig, squeezes a few drops of its juice into a cup. This she hands over to the brother, if any, of the pregnant woman. It is necessary that the brother should wear a gold ring on his

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593 right ring finger. Holding a country knife (pissan kathi) in his left hand, which he directs towards the mouth, he pours the tamarind juice over the knife with his right hand three times, and it dribbles down the knife [602] into the woman's mouth, and she drinks it. In the absence of a brother, some other near relation officiates. 843 After she has swallowed the tamarind juice, the woman is asked to pick out one of several packets of different grains placed before her. The grain in the packet she happens to select is supposed to declare the sex of the child in [574] her womb. The ceremony winds up with a sumptuous feast to all the relatives and friends of the family." In connection with pregnancy ceremonies, Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar writes that "the puli-kuti ceremony is performed at the seventh, or sometimes the ninth month. The husband has to contribute the rice, cocoanut, and plantains, and present seven vessels containing sweetmeats. In the absence of a brother, a Mārān pours the juice into the mouth of the woman." It is noted in the Cochin Census Report, 1901, that "the puli-kudi ceremony consists in administering to the woman with child a few pills of tamarind and other acid substances. The pills are placed at the end of a knife-blade, and pushed into the mouth of the woman by means of a gold ring. [593] The ceremony, which in a way corresponds to the [604] pumsavana of the Brāhmans, is performed either by a brother or uncle of the woman, and, in the absence of both, by the husband himself. Unlike Brāhmans, the ceremony is performed only at the time of the first pregnancy." In the eighth month, a ceremony, called garbha veli uzhiyal, is performed by the Kaniyan (astrologer) to remove the effects of the evil eye.

The ceremonies observed in connection with pregnancy are described as follows in the Gazetteer of

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

843 performed, usually the vadakkini, there is arranged a mat, the usual lamp (nilavilakku) with five wicks, and a para measure of rice (niracchaveppu), also the materials necessary for the performance of Ganapathi pūja (worship of the god Ganēsa), consisting of plantains, brown sugar, leaves of the sacred basil or tulasi (*Ocimum sanctum*), sandal paste, and the eight spices called [593] ashtagantham. The woman's brother performs Ganapathi pūja, and then gives some of the tamarind leaves to the Enangatti, who expresses their juice, and mixes it with [824] that of four other plants.* The mixture is boiled with a little rice, and the brother takes a little of it in a jack [602] (*Artocarpus integrifolia*) leaf folded like a spoon, and lets it run down the blade of a knife into his sister's mouth. He does this three times. Then the mixture is administered in the same manner by some woman of the husband's family, and then by an Ammāyi (wife of [574] one of the members of the girl's tarwad). The branch is then planted in the nadumittam, and feasting brings the ceremony to a close. The above description was obtained from an Urali Nāyar of Calicut taluk. In other localities and castes, the details vary considerably. [564] Sometimes the mixture is simply poured into the woman's mouth, instead of being dripped off a knife. Some castes use a small spoon of gold or silver instead of the jack leaves. In South Malabar there is not as a rule any procession to the tamarind tree. Among Agathu Charna Nāyars of South Malabar, the ceremony takes place in the nadumittam, whither the tamarind branch is brought by a Tiyan. The girl carries a valkannadi or bell-metal mirror, a charakkōl or arrow, and a pisankatti (knife). An Enangatti pours some oil

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[137] * The aimpuli or "five tamarinds" are *Tamarindus indica*, *Garcinia Cambogia*, *Spondias mangifera*, *Bauhinia racemosa*, and *Hibiscus hirtus*.

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

796 themselves in the neatest and grandest possible attire. [302] They also darken the fringes of their eyelids with a sticky preparation of soot mixed up with a little oil or ghee, and sometimes with a superficial coating of [276] antimony powder. They also wear white, black, or red marks down the middle of their foreheads. They also chew betel, and thus redden their mouths and lips. [526] They then proceed to the enjoyment of another prominent item of pleasure, viz., swinging to and fro on what is usually known as an uzhinjal, or swing made [262] of bamboo. On the festival day, after the morning bath is over, they take a light meal, and in the noon the family dinner is voraciously attacked, the essential and almost universal ingredients being ordinary ripe plantain fruits, and a delicious preparation of arrowroot powder purified and mixed with jaggery (crude sugar) or sugar, and also cocoanut. Then, till evening, dancing and [593] merry-making are ceaselessly indulged in. The husband population are inexcusably required to be present in the wives' houses before evening, as they are bound to do on [586] the Ōnam and Vishu occasions. Failure to do this is looked upon as a step, or rather the first step, on the part of the defaulting husband towards a final separa- [132] tion or divorce from the wife. Despite the rigour of the bleak December season during which the festival commonly falls, heightened inevitably by the constant blowing of the cold east wind upon their moistened frames, these lusty maidens derive considerable pleasure from their early baths, and their frolics in the water. The biting cold of the season, which makes their persons shiver and quiver, becomes to them in the midst of all their ecstatic frolics an additional source of pleasure. The two items described above, viz., the swinging and beating of the water, have each their own distinctive

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

564 here turns out to be patrilineal and patrilocal. We shall see that, as
611 usual, the question of descent is attached to the same general struc-
[591] tures as elsewhere.

613 We first note that the "patrilineage" of the South is called a *taravad* like the matrilineal units of the Nayar. The patrilineage is reported to be exogamous with a depth of five to seven generations united by the worship of lineage gods, ancestors, and snakes. Marriage tends to be
595 patrilocal, and one of the interesting features of the Tiyyar of this
[591] area is that, as with the Sinhalese, polyandrous marriages are freely
[171] permitted. A woman is married to a group of brothers who have access
585 to her, it is said, by order of seniority. The ceremony of marriage
171 again involves the gift of the cloth, and we note the custom of feeding the groom or grooms and the bride with porridge and milk as with various groups in Ceylon.

593 Inheritance is in the male line, but women retain rights in their
[428] natal household. Indeed, this right is expressed in the customary rela-
[586] tions between brothers and sisters. At divorce, the woman returns to her brother. Her eldest brother is considered her guardian. At the
[765] death of a married woman, her brothers and their children observe
[783] ritual pollution. At the death of a man, his sister's sons observe pollution and perform mourning offerings to his spirit.

604 The customary claim of the MB and the FZ are given recognition in
588 numerous ceremonies. In the prepuberty rituals, a girl goes through
[613] a mock-marriage ceremony with a boy from a "lineage" into which
[605] she might marry, who clearly stands to her in the relation of cross-cousin. Her "mother's brother's wife" (FZ?) parts her hair in certain pregnancy ceremonies. The ritual husband-boy is brought by his MB, and the girl by her MB. The boy places the *tali* necklace—indicative of married status—on her neck, where it is tied by her FZ.

582 Gough notes that cross-cousin marriage is "preferential," though
605 with the observation that it is not "enjoined to the extent" that it is
114 in the North (1955*a*, p. 62). It is clear that this statement refers to actual cross-cousin, not categorical cross-cousin, marriage. We are informed that parallel cousins on both sides are tabooed and must conclude that here again we have the Dravidian pattern of categorical cross-cousin marriage.

601 I have no information about the terminology of reference or address,
576 though it seems likely that terms of reference, at least, are identical to those of the North Tiyyar.

121 I think that all the elements of the general structure can be detected
602 in this system. There is categorical cross-cousin marriage, and the various claims of the MB and FZ upon Ego are indicated in ritual terms. This is quite in accordance, as we noted before, with the strong

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

are perpetuated as indices of status—to the extent, indeed, that with the matrilineal Thangal group, who also claim patrilineal descent from the Prophet, an elaborate combination of patronymics and matronymics has been developed (1959, p. 501).

CONCLUSION

In view of the great number of communities that have remained untouched, the evidence considered in detail may seem to offer only a very narrow theoretical base. This is not so. We have attempted to show that the general structural model may be connected to a great variety of descent patterns. Only a few cases would be sufficient to demonstrate the point. We have found many more. We have also noted the interesting balance in the customary recognition given to the formal claims of the paternal and maternal relatives upon the children of the marriage. In structures such as the Tanjore Brahman, where the father-son relationship is assured by common residence and inheritance, it is precisely the rights of the MB which are elaborated at all *rites de passage*, and the ZS has formal obligations at this man's funeral.

In the matrilineal structure of Malabar and Ceylon we find in contrast that the great proliferation of ceremonial is concerned with the rights and obligations of the father. Quite apart from the entire complex of *Tali kettu kalyanam* in Malabar, we may note that the obligations of the son at this father's funeral receive special emphasis, particularly among the Nayar. As Fawcett notes in connection with Nayar funerals: "The deceased's younger brother, or, if there is none surviving, his nephew (his sister's eldest son) sets fire to the pyre at the head of the corpse. If the deceased left a son, this son sets fire at the same time to the pyre at the foot of the corpse" (Thurston, 1906, p. 209). At this most solemn occasion the Nayar and the Kandyan Sinhalese agree on balancing the obligations of the offspring of brother and sister, for with the Sinhalese, too, the ZS as well as the son must partake in the final rites of a man.

There is always the emphasis on the connections between the children of the brother and the sister. Brother and sister must be separated, but their offspring must also be united. Dumont writes of the double principles of consanguinity and affinity, but it seems that the two must be intermeshed to protect and perpetuate the purity of the family. Perhaps this is an aspect of the union of those divine creative principles which one hears so much about in Indian philosophy: male and female, man and wife, the Brahman Lord and his consort, Shiva and Shakti. These are two, but they are also one.

Even the terminology of kinship exemplifies the idea of the union